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HOW DO THE DEMOCRATS like the revelations that John J. Raskob, chairman and chief financial angel of the Democratic National Committee, was a member of a pool organized on March 4, 1929, to gamble in Radio common stock, with a resulting profit to all participants of $5,000,000? The familiar Al Smith backers were all there —Nicholas F. Brady, W. F. Kenny, and Mr. Raskob—each drawing off a profit of $291,770 as a result of two weeks' operations, during which each was liable for $1,000,000 of the working capital of the pool. During the pool Radio common jumped in twelve days from 79 to 109¼, closing on March 19 at 96¼. Never has there been a clearer-cut example of the way prices are rigged on the Stock Exchange, and of what a gigantic gambling concern it becomes at times, with the innocent bystander holding the bag. But these pools are usually bipartisan, and so we find among those drawing down lesser profits from this boosting of the market, Walter P. Chrysler, Charles M. Schwab, and Percy A. Rockefeller, Republicans, who respectively earned for their arduous labors and the risks they ran the sums of $145,855, $58,342, and $29,171. No wonder that Mr. Schwab is reported on another page of the same newspaper which records the operations of this pool as bewailing, in a speech before the Iron and Steel Institute, the dreadful wickedness of the government in putting on such high taxes. He cries:

> We have done our part. We have put our house in order. . . . But, above all, the federal government, which is the heart of our national structure, must balance its budget and restore confidence there. From there confidence, which is the life-blood of trade, will be transfused into our retailers of finance—the banks—to reestablish that faith which is so necessary to the flow of credit. God speed the day.

Yes, God speed the day when confidence—and profits—in pools will be restored and reestablish our faith in the value of the Stock Exchange.

ALTOGETHER the recent revelations in Washington about high finance and its methods are such as to put to shame the frenzied finance of Thomas W. Lawson in muckraking days. We have the representative of another long-established and apparently conservative banking house, Mr. Walter E. Sachs, testifying that the hundred-million-dollar Goldman Sachs Trading Corporation actually paid $12,750,000 for 49 per cent of Federal Foods Corporation, in which $1,750,000 had been invested. Later this was exchanged for $900,000 worth of stock in the same company! Today the Goldman Sachs Trading Corporation stock is selling at 1¾ and is a joke in the musical shows, while the public which relied upon the good name of the firm is out practically $90,000,000. The crazy character of these transactions is shown by the fact that the $12,750,000 check advanced by the Goldman Sachs Corporation to the Postum Company went to Frosted Food, then to the United Foods Incorporated in Canada, and then to J. P. Morgan and Company as representatives of United Foods Incorporated. This was the sort of thing being done by bankers who daily criticize Congress, who decry liberalism and socialism, who assert that government must keep out of business, that they alone are fit to rule! Finally, we have Harry M. Warner of Warner Brothers admitting that by gambling in his company's stock he made $7,000,000—the Senate experts say $9,250,000—but refusing to admit that there was anything unethical in the transactions. Wall Street and the Stock Exchange have every reason to be happy that they are not overwhelmed by a spontaneous uprising of the swindled American public. The Stock Exchange surely has a day of reckoning before it.

ALREADY WE HEAR MUCH TALK about the desirability of a coalition government, a national emergency Cabinet like the present MacDonald Government in England, to see us gloriously through the existing crisis. There are even suggestions that there be only one ticket in the field next fall, with Herbert Hoover for President and Newton D. Baker or Franklin Roosevelt for Vice-President. Mr. Baker himself has just made a speech in New York in which he said that it was the patriotic duty of everybody in this hour to follow the leader, but he left his audience very considerably in doubt as to who the leader was, as he did not mention his name. Some people thought he meant Herbert Hoover; others just guessed Newton D. Baker.

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There being not the slightest difference in principle between the Democrats and Republicans, there is no reason why a most harmonious Cabinet could not be created composed of high-tariff Democrats and Republicans, big-navy-and-army Democrats and Republicans, and low-income-and-inheritance-tax Democrats and Republicans. We should witness no such foolishness as that in England, where some Liberals, like Sir Herbert Samuel, are getting up in meeting and protesting against the policies of the Cabinet of which they are a part. Never, never in our council house would there be the slightest difference of opinion; the Cabinet would be as one in its patriotic rescuing of big business from the results of its own follies, and equally unanimous in its opposition to giving a single Treasury dollar to a starving man.

IT HAS BECOME CUSTOMARY of late to make Congress the butt of all criticism. Washington has no constructive plan for meeting the economic emergency; there is throughout the country an almost complete absence of aggressive political or business leadership. But the blame for this unhappy situation, either directly or by innuendo, is invariably heaped upon our national legislative body. Eleven national figures, including Nicholas Murray Butler, Alanson B. Houghton, and Alfred E. Smith, have called upon Congress to balance the budget and enact an "economically sound" tax program. We believe these eleven men offered their criticism in all good faith, but their appeal betrays the panic which seems to be gripping many of our more prominent citizens, and which certainly cannot help to relieve the "frozen confidence" among the people which President Hoover so greatly fears. Again, it implies that Congress is opposed to balancing the budget and to adopting a sane and rational tax plan. That surely is not the case. The net effect of these attacks on Congress is to undermine popular confidence in representative government. The suspicion is spreading that partisanship and party government are somehow inimical to economic recovery. We feel with many others that partisanship can often be obstructive and reactionary. But we nevertheless realize that partisanship is necessary to the successful functioning of a democracy.

THE TARIFF is among the works of Congress which we do not hesitate to criticize and denounce. Here representative government has failed, not because of partisanship, but because of a lack of it. The Democratic Party, traditionally the champion of low tariffs, has deserted its historic position for the sake of political favors. Hence the "log-rolling" which has now succeeded in smuggling tariffs on oil, coal, lumber, and copper into the tax bill. Senators Hull, Norris, La Follette, Tydings, and others are fighting to dislodge these items. They see clearly that the tariff has been largely responsible for the continued decline in business activity. They know, for example, that Chile, Peru, Venezuela, and other good customers of the United States will suffer economically as a result of the latest tariff increases, and therefore will have to reduce the volume of their purchases in this country. These Senators are in a weak position because they must conduct their fight as individuals and not as a party organization. Yet we believe that there is sufficient low-tariff sentiment in this country to give a low-tariff party all the popular support it needs.

THE HOUSE passed the absurd Goldsborough bill without any real consideration; the House committee, for the most part, contrived to hear only the testimony favorable to it. At least the Senate committee is hearing the other side, including the strongest objections from the Secretary of the Treasury and various members of the Federal Reserve Board. What the Goldsborough bill proposes is a doubly impossible thing. The Federal Reserve Board and banks cannot, except in a very limited and undependable way, control the volume of credit and currency; and if they could the price level would not vary proportionately. The only well-known monetary economist who has testified in favor of the Goldsborough bill is Professor Irving Fisher, who enjoys the distinction of having probably the worst public record for economic prediction of anyone in the country. It was Professor Fisher who remarked in 1919 that the country was on a permanently higher commodity price level, and who assured us in 1929 that stock prices had reached a "permanent high plateau." The Senate committee will do well not to take Professor Fisher's present confident predictions of the effects of the Goldsborough bill too seriously. That bill, if passed, could not help in the achievement of its professed aim, but its passage would very seriously undermine confidence, both abroad and at home in the integrity of the dollar, and would certainly lead to heavy withdrawals of gold.

NORMAN THOMAS'S second nomination for the Presidency by the Socialists was a foregone conclusion despite a conflict of theory and practice between the two wings of the party. No one else within the party offers the leadership which Mr. Thomas has shown. No other man in public life has grown so rapidly and so sanely in the last ten years. He stands head and shoulders in force, in vision, in the possession of a far-reaching program above Mr. Hoover and the candidates now discussed by the Democrats. Were the country to choose men for their respective worth he would undoubtedly head the poll. As it is we still hope a new liberal party will arise and will make Norman Thomas its candidate also. Whether this does or does not happen, *The Nation* will support Mr. Thomas in the coming election. Those who continue to stump for the candidates of the old parties are voting for a continuance of the present chaos and confusion; for the continuance of the fooling of the mass of the American people in the interest of the privileged, the Wall Street gamblers, the protected manufacturers who believe that they own the government for the purpose of using it as they see fit. From every quarter comes testimony to the truth of Nicholas Murray Butler's assertion that the country is on the very brink of the precipice. A vote for the Republicans or Democrats means pushing us nearer the edge.

ONCE MORE Mr. Hoover, this time in a letter to the president of the American Society of Civil Engineers, has offered what is apparently his complete program for getting us out of the depression. This program includes twelve proposals, and not one of them touches anything more than symptoms. The first calls for the "quick, honest balancing of the federal budget through drastic reduction of less necessary expenses"; nothing is said, of course, about any drastic reduction in the expenditures for the army, navy, and Veterans' Bureau. The second plank insists on

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the avoidance of further Treasury security issues as "the very keystone of national and international confidence"; thus the hopes of any extensive program of public works, favored by Mr. Hoover for times of depression in the years when there was no depression, are dashed. The third, fourth, and fifth planks call for the extension of more loans to business—mainly for extension of loans of government money to institutions that do not look safe enough for private capital. The sixth calls for "unceasing effort at further strengthening of the foundation of agriculture." This, of course, proposes no specific measure at all; it is completely hollow. The eighth plank calls for the "continuation of national, community, and individual efforts in relief of distress." The word "continuation" here in connection with "national" is puzzling. Most of the rest of the proposals are for extending more government credit for various purposes. As usual Mr. Hoover has not one word to say about the reduction of tariffs, the adjustment of war debts, or any other measure really concerned with the world causes and not merely with the local effects of the world depression.

AS WE GO TO PRESS Mayor Walker of New York City is about to go on the witness stand in what appears to be the crisis of his career. It now remains to be seen whether by his personal charm, his incredible effrontery, and his unquestioned ability the Mayor can get free from the entanglements in which he finds himself. It appears plain that Rodman Wanamaker paid his "formal" expenses to Europe in 1927; that in addition Mr. Walker accepted a letter of credit of $10,000 from one of the backers of the Equitable Coach Company one day *before* he signed a contract giving the company a valuable franchise which he himself had forced through the Board of Estimate, later overdrawing that letter of credit by $3,000; that this $13,000 was spent in five days in Paris and on the return voyage. When shown the evidence by the reporters, the Mayor said: "I see the headlines but where is the evidence?" and had no word of defense to offer. Similar expense bills have been unearthed for thirteen trips made by the Mayor or the "City Hall gang" at a total expense of $7,145.61 for special Pullmans; the bill for $2,008.34 for the Mayor's trip to California to plead for Mooney is still owing to the Pullman Company. Finally, the Mayor has yet to explain his connection with Russell T. Sherwood, his "financial agent," with whom he shared a private deposit box.

PUBLIC OPINION IN FRANCE in recent years has been weak and ineffective. Cabinet members and party leaders have largely ignored when they could not control it. This was unquestionably true of the governments headed by Poincaré, Tardieu, and Laval, and only less true of some of the more moderate cabinets of the last decade. Therefore, despite the swing to the left in the national elections in May, there was considerable doubt whether this shift in public opinion would have any noticeable effect on the policies of the new Government. Edouard Herriot, leader of the victorious Radical Socialist Party, has been as nationalistic and anti-German in his campaign speeches as any of the leaders of the Tardieu and Laval groups. Even Joseph Paul-Boncour, the Socialist, wavered before the nationalists, particularly on the question of disarmament. But now it appears that the French people, having spoken at the polls, mean to be taken seriously. Whatever Herriot or Paul-Boncour may think of the matter, the press of the left parties is in growing measure demanding a more moderate attitude toward disarmament, and is even going so far as to demand a reduction in the size of the French army! This is really great news from a country which is supposed to be one of the most militaristic on earth. And there is every indication that Herriot, who will probably be named Premier, and other leaders of the left will bow to this new and surprisingly vigorous public opinion.

THE MOSLEM-HINDU RIOTS in Bombay and Calcutta, which have resulted in a hundred and fifty deaths and ten times that many minor injuries, no more indicate a general breakdown of Indian self-control than our own race and labor riots have meant general disorder in the United States. But that they are especially unfortunate just now is evidenced by the haste with which supporters of British rule have cited these clashes as proof of the need for outside control to preserve internal peace and order. They will strengthen the hands of imperialistic diehards. And although there is no indication that they imply any swing of the powerful All-India Moslem Congress away from its recent stand against British procedure, they must be regarded as a definite, if minor, setback to the *swaraj* movement. It is fair to point out, however, that on two counts British policy must share responsibility for such upthrusts of native religious intolerance. The delay in granting a generous settlement has intensified the previous jealousies and suspicions between Hindus and Moslems, and has encouraged the more belligerent and irresponsible elements in each group to take direct action. Furthermore, both among Hindus and Moslems there are pacific and tolerant leaders who must be profoundly distressed by the reports of the riots and their possible effect on world opinion; many of these, if free to assert their influence, might have prevented the excesses. But they are for the most part in jail.

AMELIA EARHART PUTNAM HERSELF said all that might be said about the value to aviation of her ocean flight. "I realize," she said, "that the flight meant nothing to aviation. After all, there have been a great many who have flown the Atlantic now, and such crossings will become commonplace. . . . This was but a personal justification of mine, and I thoroughly enjoyed it." Thus handsomely did the first woman to fly the Atlantic alone take the sting out of any criticism that might be offered on her venture. When one adds that she flew for ten hours with a burnt-out exhaust manifold, through mist, rain, and fog, with a broken fuel gauge that dripped gasoline down her back to an accompaniment of flames shooting from the exhaust, and with an altimeter that was not registering, one can surely say that she is a person of courage and pertinacity and deserves a salvo of applause for not turning back when she might have with comparative safety. If we could only let matters go at that, how pleasant it would be. But we shall now be treated to the usual round of speeches of congratulation, newspaper feature stories, radio broadcasts, receptions, huzzas, and torn-up telephone books when the flier returns. It takes a brave heart to fly the tempestuous ocean; but the courage required to face the whoop-la that inevitably follows is almost beyond the comprehension of a mere editor.

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The Roosevelt Candidacy

DESPITE increasing opposition Governor Roosevelt leads in the race for the Democratic nomination. We still do not know how he really stands on the vital issues of the day—what, for example, he would do in the matter of debts and reparations if he were chosen President. Whether he would compromise with the protectionists if sent to the White House is also not clear, though he plainly leans in that direction. We can only guess what he really thinks about a multitude of other questions. Take the issues of Philippine independence and our Caribbean imperialism. Is he for both in the Wilsonian manner; does he still approve of the policy that took us into Nicaragua, Haiti, and San Domingo, and made him personally shake the big stick at Mexico? There are newspaper reports that he is withholding his fire until Chicago can begin to see the whites of the delegates' eyes; that he, too, believes that in America you cannot hold the front page longer than two weeks and that those two weeks should be the ones just preceding the convention. His latest speeches bear this out. Addressing the Georgia Kiwanians he spoke favorably of the Commandment "Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself," and dwelt upon the confusion of the average man and woman as to his or her rights and duties in these evil times. He referred again to his "forgotten man," to whom he added the "forgotten child"; and he read a familiar letter from Thomas Jefferson to the effect that a "favored few" were not "born booted and spurred, ready to ride mankind, either legitimately or by the grace of God." Speaking at Oglethorpe University, the Governor came out for a "more equitable distribution of the national income," asserting that the country needs and demands "bold, persistent experimentation"; and he attacked Wall Street—a plain bid for progressive and liberal support, without, however, anything detailed or specific in the way of a program. Still platitudes and generalizations!

Let us hope that the reports are true; that the Governor will speak out like a man and a leader in the brief weeks still remaining before the Democratic Convention. But that it will be too late to impress himself as a vigorous and powerful personality upon the country is plain. He has been nothing of the sort in Albany, where his weakness and readiness to compromise have been as evident as have his personal charm and his absolute integrity. But we are receiving appeals on all sides not to be too hard on him. Is he not a gentleman? Is he not impeccably honest? Is he not in general right-minded, and more truly liberal than any other candidate? Is he not certain to surround himself with a strong Cabinet? Is he not, in short, a great deal better than any of the other Democratic candidates? To this we answer that we are not in the least interested in building up another good man as a great political figure because he possesses all the family virtues and is devoted to the Ten Commandments. We have not the slightest intention of describing Governor Roosevelt as a satisfactory Presidential candidate; on the contrary, we propose to warn people in season and out of season against the fallacy of turning to a man merely because he is a good and charming fellow.

There might be some excuse for another such compromise if we were living in ordinary times. As it is, we are face to face with the gravest of economic crises, which Democratic and Republican leaders, and Mr. Hoover himself, are fond of describing as a condition more serious than our last war. To put into the Presidency at this hour another weak man in the place of Herbert Hoover would be all the more disastrous because of the mistaken idea that Franklin D. Roosevelt is really a liberal. But waving aside all question of his views on any given point, the fact is that this is no dominating, forceful man, however kindly and well meaning. The hour calls for a totally different type. It would be a misfortune indeed, and add grievously to the cynicism of the masses, if they should be told that Franklin D. Roosevelt was really the leader needed, only to find him out later for what he actually is.

But, we shall be asked again, whom would you have the Democrats nominate? This is not our function. We are not supporters of the Democratic Party and we have long since told our readers that we shall not support a candidate of either of the old parties. We stand with President Butler in his belief that the hour calls for a new party and that nothing less will serve, but unlike President Butler we are ready to go through with the proposal. We wish the beginning made here and now. We do not believe that the stop-Roosevelt movement has as yet succeeded in its purpose. The belief of the Roosevelt managers that they are likely to get 653 delegates on the first ballot is by no means to be discredited. As the Hoover nomination in Kansas City showed, it is difficult indeed to stop a candidate who is so far in the lead as is Franklin Roosevelt now. This beating the leader by means of several other candidacies is not what it is cracked up to be. But from the point of view of the Democratic Party and that of the need of the country the success of Governor Roosevelt affords no hope whatever that we shall have a really different Administration in Washington from that with which we are afflicted now.

Governor Roosevelt will undoubtedly feel that he stands not with those who believe themselves "born booted and spurred" into the world to ride mankind by grace of their ability to take advantage of our economic conditions, that is, of the rule of special privilege, the sale of governmental favors to the highest contributors to campaign funds. In his heart he will doubtless wish to side with the mass of mankind "not born with saddles on their backs," but he has not yet demonstrated his willingness to cut loose from party ties and to govern without fear or favor. Have we anything to gain if he wears the saddle and the Raskobs and the other market plungers who hold the purse-strings of the Democratic Party choose, booted and spurred, to ride him? What is to be hoped for is that even in the last moment at Chicago there will come a realization to his Western supporters that Franklin Roosevelt is an extraordinarily weak candidate to put in the field, and that there will then be a determined effort to find someone within the party to offer to the public some of the leadership which the country craves. Whether one is for or against the old parties, one must hope they will put their best in the field. O. G. V.

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Bankers to the Rescue?

THE formation of a committee of twelve bankers and industrialists called together by Governor Harrison of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York "for the purpose"—we quote the official statement—"of considering methods of making the large funds now being released by the Federal Reserve banks useful affirmatively in developing business," is considered by the press to be tremendously important. We hope we may be forgiven, however, if we find the banner headlines devoted to it strangely reminiscent of those devoted to the conferences called by President Hoover in the winter of 1929, from which the great industrialists and railroad presidents emerged to say that they were going to spend billions of dollars in the coming year to keep things humming; and of the headlines which appeared first when the National Credit Corporation, and second when the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was proposed.

There is no reason to suppose that this new device of the Hoover Administration will succeed where these previous devices have failed. Indeed, there is considerably less to be expected of it than of the preceding devices. Though the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has not prevented conditions from getting worse than they were, it at least doubtless prevented them from getting as bad as they otherwise might have been. It is always possible to stave off some bankruptcies and even to prevent others altogether by rushing in sufficient amounts of fresh money, and this can be done with relative rapidity when the money is the public's and not your own. But how much money will the new committee of bankers and industrialists make available?

Let us look at what it proposes to do. In the last twelve weeks the Federal Reserve banks have purchased about $725,000,000 of United States Government securities. The purpose of these purchases has been to force more credit on the market. The intention was that when commercial banks and individuals had sold their government securities to the reserve banks, they would be obliged to reinvest the liquid funds they received for them. This reinvestment or relending has not seemed to follow, however, and the new committee has been brought into being for the purpose of doing something about it. Doing what? The committee's statement is vague. It will "secure more coordinated and so more effective action" on the part of the banking and industrial interests. "Coordination" has been a favorite word with Mr. Hoover for many years, but what does it mean here? Six of the twelve members of the new committee are heads of the leading New York banks. As heads of these banks, they have recently been as cautious in granting new loans as they were lacking in caution a few years ago. They are not expanding credit because they have not found enough applicants for loans in whom they have confidence. Are they going to advocate collectively loans that none of them would think of making individually? Is each one going to keep his own bank particularly liquid for the sake of safety, while trying to persuade all the rest to expand loans for the sake of revival?

Or is this just another committee—just another list of big names for the sake of generating confidence? And how much confidence is it now likely to generate? One of the members of the committee is Charles E. Mitchell, chairman of the National City Bank. This is the same Mr. Mitchell who, against the Federal Reserve Board's request, defiantly threw millions of dollars of call money into an already appallingly inflated stock market in 1929. It is the same Mr. Mitchell who helped to negotiate a foolish agreement to take over the Corn Exchange Bank at the ridiculous levels of 1929—an agreement which his bank had to duck when the crash started. It is the same Mr. Mitchell who saw "nothing to worry about" in September, 1929; who remarked in mid-October of that year, after the first collapse, that "many leading industrial securities are now at levels which would have been considered perfectly sound and conservative even by the standards of ten years ago." A week later he was confident that the decline had "carried many issues below their true value" and had "badly overrun itself." Perhaps Mr. Mitchell has now lost the implicit confidence he had in stocks when they were selling on the average at more than five times their present levels; perhaps that confidence has remained unshaken all the way down. But does it really matter? If he has confidence now, is it likely to inspire confidence in anyone else?

The Nation would be the last to disparage any plan that really promised to bring industrial revival, but it can only see in this latest committee one more of the Administration's typical efforts to bully the country back into confidence. Confidence is not to be had by this obsessive attention to symptoms, nor is it likely to be inspired by the same bankers and industrialists who bear so heavy a load of the responsibility for our present plight.

Japanese Fascism

THIS specter called Japanese fascism will not blow away overnight. It has come to stay and probably in more substantial form than we of the Western world are visualizing it at the moment. For it is not the product of a temporary economic depression. In the first place, Japanese economy has been in the doldrums since the collapse of its war-time prosperity in 1920. Since then disintegration has been taking place slowly, progressively, but none the less surely. There is the pressure, for one thing, of gradually increasing numbers. The population problem has not been solved, and does not seem likely to be solved in the foreseeable future. For another thing, Japanese statesmen, industrialists, and bankers have since the revolution of 1868 been trying to create a modern industrial economy, but they have lacked the requisite raw materials. Yet they have pressed recklessly on with their dream of empire, building artificially, creating virtually out of nothing. That they have much to show for their labor, more than the Western world had expected, cannot be questioned, but the unstable foundation of their economy, the lack of resources, and the surplus of population are now beginning to shake the whole structure. Peasants with their tiny farms, middle-class workers without tangible property and, when they have jobs, with but meager incomes, are growing desperate out of their hunger and misery. They cannot see that the new capitalism of Japan has profited them any.

Back of this rising peril to modern Japan lies the long

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militaristic history of the country. For thirteen centuries and more the commander-in-chief of the army was the head of the state. The emperor, though that august person was allowed to hold court and to pass his title on to his son, was virtually a prisoner of the military clan. He had no authority, no voice in government; the military was supreme. This state of affairs lasted until Matthew C. Perry opened Japan to foreign intercourse and commerce. The adherents of the emperor overthrew the military clan and restored the Mikado to his throne. That marked the decline of the military power; the emperor reserved this power for himself. The revolution also marked the advent of the new capitalism. The Japanese appeared satisfied to let the economic experiment go on, to let the power of the state be used in building up great industrial, commercial, and financial enterprises. Even though this meant the enriching of a few individuals at the expense of the state, the Japanese masses did not protest, for they saw as the ultimate goal the greater glorification of the entire nation. But the time has finally come when a bed, a roof, and a bit of food seem more important to the peasant and the laborer.

It is upon this basis that Japanese fascism is being erected. The militarists, long the rulers of Japan, are again bestirring themselves. They feel that they are by tradition entitled to a voice in national affairs, particularly in emergencies like the present. They consider the economic experiment to have failed. They want industry socialized; they want the state to take over all productive enterprise. And in this they have the support of the lower classes. The fascists may not openly seize power. They may be content to let men like Admiral Saito, newly appointed Premier, govern "in the name of all the people." But they will undoubtedly remain in control behind the scenes.

Saving the Country

WE are pleased to report to our readers that although the country—their country and ours—is in the gravest danger, it can and will be saved from destruction, battle, murder, sudden death, and the red menace. This salvation is to be had at the hands of the Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs. These ladies have issued a pamphlet called "Destructive and Constructive Forces in America; with Suggestions for Meeting Them." Beginning with the prophet Jeremiah and proceeding rapidly through Patrick Henry, Secretary of Labor Doak, a poet in the Moscow *Pravda,* Karl Marx, and the Union Theological Seminary of Columbia University, the case for the menace and the program of salvation are succinctly, if not brilliantly, stated.

Frankly, the Russian Communists plan the bloody overthrow of the United States government by force, violence, and mayhem. They say so themselves, and one need not pay attention to "the expressions of those Americans who go to Russia for six days, six weeks, or six months." Those "we will not even consider." But "as one of the Russian poets expresses it: 'Communism leads to disarmament; disarmament to communism.'" And as another Russian poet wrote (we quote the Virginia pamphlet) impassionedly, under the title of A Day Dream:

> After passing the ruins of Detroit
> and here is Cleveland
> It is Ruthenberg now.
> Factories and mills have not been
> Pulsating for some time;
> The entire city was blown up
> The enemy fought like a wild beast.

Which at least proves conclusively that we ought to be protected from Bolshevik poets.

Our Virginia ladies, however, are well aware that the worst dangers come from within. The pamphlet says: "It seems incredible that in New York City, at the Union Theological Seminary, in the Christmas holidays, December 28-30, 1931, was held an intercollegiate conference." Well, let us say it seems almost incredible, what with Christmas just over and New Year's eve almost upon us. But there was a conference, and it carried "as its theme the amazing slogan 'Guiding the Revolution,' and some of the topics discussed were 'College Students in a Changing World,' and 'What Are the Essentials of Genuine Social Planning?'" Another conference was held in Chicago on the same days, New Year's eve or no New Year's eve, and at this among the subjects for discussion were "New Tactics in the Social Conflict," and "Revolution Through Education." Moreover, the pamphlet goes on, "The conferences were held under the auspices of the League for Industrial Democracy. . . . The executive director of this society, Norman Thomas, ran for President of the United States on the Socialist ticket, and your children, unless trained in patriotism, may be led to indorse the program of the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics, fed to them by clever adults." Which last, however you look at the rest of it, rather seems to be a compliment to Mr. Thomas.

Now what shall we do about this? First, say the Virginia ladies, "Choose for your study course next winter God and Country, and learn the value of an aroused, vocal, vigorous public opinion for both God and Country." Follow the precepts of George Washington, among which are "his regard for his mother"; "his knowledge of the fundamentals of government"; "his foresight in asking for a merchant marine"; "his devotion to childhood"; "his love of Home"; "his fondness for agricultural pursuits." These are random general suggestions which the Virginia Women's Clubs throw out; but they have a more specific program, some planks of which are as follows:

> We can study to inform ourselves.
>
> Refuse to be forced into hearing all kinds of fallacious doctrines under the plea of being broad-minded and of hearing all sides.
>
> Interest the libraries of our cities in buying books that extol patriotism and rid the shelves of some books that need to be eliminated.
>
> Point out the need of adequate deportation measures.
>
> Deplore the increase in crime.

This covers the main points of the program. A New Orleans woman was once heard to say that she did not fear the revolution at all because she would just go back to New Orleans with her family in perfect confidence that the New Orleanians would never have heard of the uprising. Not so in Virginia; the revolution is already there. But Steps Are Being Taken. And no one, not even the most timorous, need fear the ultimate triumphant result.

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The Hermit of Albany

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Franklin D. Roosevelt

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

I WENT to an important New York lawyer, prominent for many years in liberal reform politics, and asked him about Governor Roosevelt. The lawyer replied, but without enthusiasm: "Please don't be too hard on Roosevelt. He means well. He means to do the right thing." I turned to Walter Lippmann's column in the New York *Herald Tribune* of January 8 and found Mr. Lippmann writing: "Franklin D. Roosevelt is an amiable man with many philanthropic impulses, but he is not the dangerous enemy of anything. He is too eager to please." Nothing sums up Governor Roosevelt better than these phrases. There is no leadership in the man, for leadership requires a person to take a positive stand, to speak plainly, and plain-speaking quite often gives offense.

Roosevelt wants to be President, to serve in the highest office to which duty could call him, but he knows that to succeed in public service he must first show himself a shrewd politician. And so, though he really knows little of politics, he attempts to play the game as he believes it should be played. Every public utterance, every public gesture, is open to the suspicion that it is designed solely with a view to enhancing his political prospects, for that way lies the path of duty. He appeals for votes on every hand; he attempts the impossible, to be all things to all men. That is the way of the politician, of course, but just therein lies Roosevelt's weakness. The average politician knows when and how to compromise. Roosevelt, ever eager to please, ever hesitating lest by positive action he offend some small part of the electorate, is temperamentally unable to choose the proper moment or method. He is always undecided. In the end he has always to give way to superior politicians, to organized machine pressure. And thus it so frequently happens that he overlooks his pretensions to liberalism and bows to the will of the power trust, the bankers, the reactionary leaders of labor, to Tammany and the McCooey ring.

Only once has Roosevelt shown any capacity for leadership. But even then he was not the crusader but rather the determined apologist, and ultimately he had to haul down his colors and submit rather shamefacedly to Tammany dictation. This was in 1911 when he first entered the State senate. With the help of the usual Tammany tactics, Charles F. Murphy was endeavoring to compel the legislature to elect his candidate, William F. Sheehan, to the United States Senate. But the young new Senator from Dutchess County rebelled against Tammany, organized and led a group of Democratic insurgents, and by holding this little band together succeeded in deadlocking the election for more than three months. There was in him at that moment some of the fire of rebellion, if none of the fervor which marks the true liberal reformer. Throughout the long struggle Roosevelt remained the gentleman. When Robert F. Wagner, then a State Senator, denounced him as a publicity-seeker, he "entered a modest disclaimer." When he wanted to call Murphy a liar, which Murphy undoubtedly was, he instead denied "any intention of impugning the veracity" of the Tammany leader, but said he believed "Mr. Murphy had again been grossly misinformed by some unscrupulous person." Roosevelt fraternized with the opposition, for in his heart he could bear them no ill-will. There is some doubt that he even knew what the fight was about, though he must have had some inkling of it, for throughout the senate debate there were many references to the fact that Sheehan was the candidate of the Ryan-Belmont financial interests, while the opposition candidate was Edward M. Shepard. As such things go, it was a classic battle, and it resulted in the defeat of both Sheehan and Shepard. At the trial of the libel charges brought by William Barnes, Jr., Republican boss of New York, against Theodore Roosevelt four years later, Franklin Roosevelt testified that there had been a deal between Barnes and Tammany to put Sheehan across. Here again, for the last time so far as the public record shows, Franklin Roosevelt flared up in indignation against Tammany. But he rather spoiled his case by sheepishly admitting to Barnes's counsel that he himself had voted for the ultimate Tammany candidate, James A. O'Gorman, after the deadlock in the historic 1911 battle had been broken.

In a way Roosevelt has built up a defense mechanism. Being weak himself, he wants the state, which he is ever seeking to serve, strong and powerful. This disposition has made of Franklin Roosevelt an imperialist and a militarist. This side of his character he boldly displayed the moment he became Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1913. We were in trouble with Mexico. Roosevelt was loudest among those who were asserting that the United States should put Mexico in its place. We went into Haiti in 1915. Assistant Secretary Roosevelt directed the operations, and soon thereafter visited the unhappy island to look with satisfaction upon the achievements of our marines. The World War was on, and Franklin Roosevelt was among the first to assert that the United States needed a powerful navy, a fleet second only to that of England. He addressed Bible classes, patriotic societies, and the National Civic Federation to urge popular support for his navy program. He appeared before Congressional committees to insist that the government adopt "a great building program." Before the House Committee on Naval Affairs on March 28, 1916, he expressed the opinion that "in a naval building race the United States could outbuild Germany." That his speeches were directed against Germany is clear, though why he should have taken that stand in view of President Wilson's neutrality proclamation has never been explained. When the little-navy group in Washington, for reasons of economy, began to criticize the naval-expansion plans, Roosevelt screamed in a public speech that "not one dollar, not one ship, not one man" must be taken from the building program then under way. "Although we have in the past few years increased our navy faster than ever before," he declared, "other Powers have increased theirs even faster." He was not only willing but eager to press forward in that mad race. His big-navy mania reached its climax in October, 1916, when Charles Evans Hughes mildly suggested that the navy ought to pay less attention to the minute particulars of its building pro-

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gram and more to its target practice. Roosevelt heatedly replied that Hughes had "insulted" every officer and man in the navy.

Let no one for a moment think that this militaristic spirit arose only from his association with the Navy Department in Washington, or that it was in some way due to the fact that a war was then going on in Europe. Franklin Roosevelt is still the militarist, although today he makes the necessary concessions to the peace movement in this country, whose existence cannot be denied and whose votes are also counted. Speaking before the State convention of the American Legion at Saratoga Springs on September 5, 1930, he said: "We should all work against war, but if it should come we should be better prepared than we were before. . . . I am not militaristic by any means. I do not believe in a large standing army, as you know, nor in a large navy, but *I am* 100 *per cent for having this country ready for an emergency.*" Such is the language of every American militarist. It appears strange that a man who feels so strongly on the question of preparedness should also have succumbed so completely to Woodrow Wilson's idealism, but the fact remains that next to Newton Baker and one or two others Franklin Roosevelt was the most ardent of Wilsonian idealists. Indeed, he stood almost alone at the San Francisco convention in entertaining the vague notion that Wilson should and could be nominated for a third term. And it was not until a few months ago that he publicly divested himself of this touching faith in the Wilsonian philosophy.

Roosevelt's grand opportunity as a liberal and progressive came with the stock-market crash of 1929. He was Governor of the country's largest industrial State. He could have led the way in adopting a practical and adequate public-works program at the very start of the depression, in pressing for unemployment relief, in seeking to readjust the overburdened labor market through a statutory shortening of the hours of labor. But what has he actually accomplished? Very little. The Employment Commission he appointed early in 1930 had neither authority nor funds. It accomplished precisely nothing. At that time Roosevelt favored unemployment insurance, but after the American Federation of Labor declared against such insurance he fell into a deep silence on the subject. Later he recanted, set up a commission to study the question, and has given the commission's plan his special blessing. The plan is far from perfect, even far from adequate. For one thing, it calls for compulsory private insurance and not State insurance, and that is its weakest feature. But the plan at least recognizes the need for some such system. Yet it remains on paper, Roosevelt having done nothing more than approve it. A public-works program calling for expenditure of $20,000,000 was adopted some time ago. This was sadly inadequate, as the Governor himself recognized in a magazine article last winter, in which he half-heartedly suggested that a $100,000,000 program was needed. And, political contracting being what it is, the whole of the original $20,000,000 has not yet been spent, although the need for work-relief has greatly increased.

Roosevelt has declared himself opposed to a cash dole, but he favors relief in the form of food and clothing when the State and local communities are unable to provide sufficient relief in the way of jobs. Even during the depression the average New York employee has been working fifty-four hours a week. One would think that a progressive Governor would employ every means at his command to reduce the length of the working week. Indeed, Franklin Roosevelt wrote last November to Paul Blanshard of the City Affairs Committee: "I am entirely sympathetic to any movement to abolish the seven-day week, which is a method of industrial management that breaks down the physical and mental vigor of the working people and which, under the present conditions of unemployment, has no economic justification." Yet a bill that was drafted with a view to ending the seven-day week was killed in the legislature by the opposition of the heads of various State departments, all Roosevelt appointees. Many State employees, particularly those on duty at the various institutions, were at that time, and still are, working seven days a week, ten to twelve hours a day! Roosevelt might seek to justify this poor record by explaining that he does not control the legislature. No more does Philip La Follette control the Wisconsin legislature. Nevertheless, unlike Governor Roosevelt, Governor La Follette has worked at a terrific pace to put through at least a part of his program, has thrown all his energy and talent into this single job, and as a result has a great deal more than has the progressive Governor of New York to show for his pains.

Compared with his record on good government, Roosevelt's labor record is one of brilliant accomplishment. Two years ago, when the stench of corruption in the New York City courts had begun to stifle even the more complacent members of the community and had caused them to join the reformers in complaining, the Governor balked at supporting or initiating an investigation. He wrote that he could not act "until it becomes apparent that the local officials charged with prosecuting crime within their respective jurisdictions have refused or failed to carry out the duty imposed upon them by law." But it was just these local officials who were to be investigated! Roosevelt was asking Tammany to investigate itself! Ultimately, however, the stink became so noticeable that the Governor was moved to ask the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court to begin an inquiry. In much the same manner public opinion prodded and pushed Roosevelt into supporting the legislature when that body voted a sweeping investigation into the affairs of the municipal government. But Roosevelt's heart was not in the job. The only heat or indignation he has shown at any time during the city investigation has been directed not at Tammany, but at John Haynes Holmes and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise of the City Affairs Committee for their zealousness in demanding that men of established guilt be removed from office. Holmes and Wise got for their pains the retort that "if they would serve their God as they seek to serve themselves, the people of the city of New York would be the gainers." Throughout the inquiry, although constantly prodded into action by men like Norman Thomas, Louis Waldman, and Samuel Seabury, the Governor has displayed extreme reluctance to do anything that might embarrass Tammany; and Mr. Seabury, counsel for the investigating committee, recently complained that, though the facts in the case of Sheriff Farley of New York County had long been known, it was not until "I myself filed charges before the Governor and after two months' delay that we got some action." While Roosevelt removed Farley, he has done nothing about other members of the sheriff's staff who, the investigation has proved, pocketed even more of the people's money. And Roosevelt has never as much as lifted a finger

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to annoy the McCooey ring in Brooklyn. He did not ask the Appellate Division to inquire into the courts in that borough, although the scandal involved the Brooklyn courts as well. There is also the outstanding and shameless example of the bipartisan judiciary deal. Brooklyn probably needed four new courts. The Republicans at Albany refused to approve the necessary legislation because they knew the political spoils involved would go exclusively to the McCooey Democratic machine. And the Democrats lacked the votes. So a deal was arranged whereby twelve instead of four courts were to be created, seven of the new judgeships going to Democrats and the remaining five to Republicans. Roosevelt knew of this deal. Prominent citizens and civic leaders of Brooklyn warned him of it. Nevertheless, with all the scandalous facts before him, he signed the bill creating the twelve judicial plums for McCooey and his Republican allies. Later the Governor callously declared that if the voters of Brooklyn did not like the judges the bosses had picked for them, they could vote for other candidates—but everyone knows that the McCooey candidates always win in Brooklyn.

The revelations of the Seabury investigation have for months been pouring forth in an endless but thoroughly sickening parade. But in his last message to the legislature Governor Roosevelt could find no words to condemn the widespread graft and corruption and utter disregard for law being exposed. He could say only that "local government has in most communities been guilty of great waste and duplication, of unnecessary improvements, and of thoroughly unbusiness-like practices." Not a word about the rotten situation on Manhattan Island! In the same message Roosevelt declared that "year after year legislatures have completely and brazenly ignored recommendations by the governor and demands from the public for safeguarding and improving our election machinery." The Governor appears to have forgotten that two years ago he vetoed at Tammany's behest a sound and sane bill that would have gone far toward eliminating election frauds. In the matter of improving the Civil Service, another necessary step toward better government, Roosevelt has likewise heeded Tammany and the municipal rings. The Hewitt reclassification bill passed at the last session would have removed many of the inequities now to be found in the Civil Service and would have made it difficult for politicians to manipulate many of the lesser State jobs. Although Roosevelt "looked with great favor on this serious effort to reclassify the State employees," he found it necessary to return the bill without his approval. Why? Simply because it promised to do the job it set out to do. Every liberal and reform organization favored the bill. Tammany and the other municipal rings opposed it. Roosevelt deliberated over the measure for twenty-nine days, and finally succumbed to Tammany's pleas. In other ways he has shown the same weakness. He approved a law in 1930 specifically placing all positions in the Division of Parole under the Civil Service. He has since insisted that the Civil Service Commission exempt from examination four parole officers in the executive department of the Division of Parole who had failed in the tests for parole officer under the very law he had approved. It hardly need be added that these four men are Roosevelt supporters. Since January, 1931, by refusing to act, Roosevelt has permitted the provisional employment without examination of twenty persons in the State Law Department who normally would come under the Civil Service Act. More plums for the politicians.

In the final analysis Roosevelt's fame as a progressive rests on his water-power record. It is on this issue that he has attracted the support of men like Senators Norris, Wheeler, and Dill. They look upon him as an ardent enemy of the power trust. He is anything but that. True, he has several times in speeches and otherwise taken a progressive stand on the power question, and he has no doubt spoken sincerely, but here again his fundamental weakness has prevented him from taking positive action. Generally speaking, his policy differs little from that of Alfred E. Smith. He wants the State to develop its own water power (and then only on certain sites), but he also wants to leave the actual distribution to private companies. He must know that the real profit in the electricity industry lies in distribution, not in development and generation. Smith took the same stand. On March 5, 1926, Governor Smith declared that "when we speak about furnishing cheaper light, heat, and power, we mean we will furnish it cheaper to the distributing company than such company is now able to buy it." But even Smith did not claim credit for having initiated this policy. In a speech on December 13, 1926, he showed in detail how the Smith-Roosevelt policy had been first laid down in 1907 by Charles Evans Hughes. Far from bothering the power trust, the Smith-Roosevelt position has been indorsed by numerous spokesmen for the utilities, including Owen D. Young, William H. Woodin, and Nicholas Brady. Lastly, this progressive policy is hardly to be distinguished from that set forth and approved by President Hoover in his message of March 3, 1931, vetoing the Norris Muscle Shoals resolution.

But why does Governor Roosevelt speak only of State development of power sites on the St. Lawrence? Why not also include Niagara and other sites? Is it because the power companies do not want to be saddled with the tremendous initial cost that would be involved in developing the St. Lawrence, but are perfectly willing to have this done at State expense so long as they can keep their profitable distribution monopoly? And is it because of the lower initial cost of developing the Niagara site, which makes that project attractive to the power trust, that Roosevelt is not urging State development there? Moreover, why was he prepared a few years ago, at the request of Senator Wagner, to allow the Niagara Falls Power Company to get a strangle-hold on the Niagara site by having itself appointed the agent of the federal government in water-power negotiations with Canada? These and many other questions Governor Roosevelt will have to answer to satisfy true progressives and liberals. He favors the prudent-investment theory, but he has done nothing to put it into practice. He favors the Wisconsin power-district plan, but hardly lifted his voice in support of the Dunnigan power-district bill when it was before the last session of the legislature. On October 28, 1930, Roosevelt declared that "the Democratic policy toward the great water power of this State does not contemplate the State's going into the business of selling electricity to the homes." Is this the voice of the flaming progressive, the dangerous enemy of the power trust? But, then, Walter Lippman has reminded us that Franklin D. Roosevelt "is not the dangerous enemy of anything. He is too eager to please."

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The Right to Get Shot

By ARTHUR GARFIELD HAYS

WE went to Kentucky to assert the civil rights of freedom of speech and assemblage. We actually found ourselves asserting the civil right to get shot at! Before leaving New York we were warned by mail by the county attorney that our "godless, self-appointed, nondescript, iconoclastic minority of grandiloquent egotists" would be treated like "mad dogs." Apparently he expressed the official point of view. In London, Kentucky, fifty miles from the "bloody Cumberlands," warnings came from various sources. One poor, pathetic, spiritual-looking woman said: "Mr. Hays, don't go—don't try to go. I'm prayin' for ye but they'll get ye." The atmosphere in court was quiet but tense. Sheriff Blair testified that the excitement in the community was such that we would be like gnats in a storm. He would protect us if he "happened" to be around. The chief of police likewise would act if anything occurred "in his presence."

The court advised us that we had made our point in the court proceedings and that there was no reason for us to do any more than take an appeal. He laid stress upon the right of "freedom from" outside critics. He strongly advised us not to go to Pineville, though he admitted we had the right. He admonished the officials of Bell and Harlan counties that if anything happened to us it would be a blot on the escutcheon of Kentucky.

This shifted the responsibility to the officials. If they admitted us to Pineville and bloodshed followed, the infamy would be on their heads. If they barred us, fearing trouble, it would be an admission that civil government had broken down. They were suddenly faced publicly with the obligation not merely to preserve order but to protect rights.

First the officials had threatened; then they were willing to help us "if they were there"; then they were ready to give us protection—so they said; finally they feared they couldn't protect us. In the morning we were met at the border by a large force consisting of the officials of the town, police officers, and some deputies. We were handed statements that they believed in "free speech and assemblage" but not at that time. We were told we could go no farther. They said it was necessary to have a permit for a meeting and they would not grant a permit. They claimed the town of Pineville was seething with excitement in the early morning, which we doubted; that the leading members of the community had met and decided that protection was impossible. They had therefore concluded to turn us back, and they did.

An attorney of Pineville, who represented members of the National Miners Union, came to London, said he had tried to stop us on the road to tell us that there were rough characters in the town carrying guns; that the spirit aroused had made it clear that if anybody took a shot at us he would become a hero and have little to fear from the local authorities. The question was then academic. Fortunately for us, our point was as well made by the eviction as by the threatened violence. In Knoxville I was later informed that the contemplated punishment was "tar and feathers." At the time I should have regarded that as a very fair compromise.

The fundamental issue in Bell and Harlan counties has been one of the right of union organization. The United Mine Workers were forced out—the I. W. W. came in. The I. W. W. was suppressed—the National Miners Union came in. Then these people tried to make the issue one of communism. Of course, it is one of unionization and civil liberties. A coal operator was on the stand for the defense. After stating that conditions were dangerous, he said that the spirit was stirred up by "Com*mun*ists" and the National Miners Union. I asked him which union he approved. He said: "None of them; we can't do business if they have unions."

Democratic institutions have completely broken down in Bell and Harlan counties. We went to inquire whether the right of ingress to a part of the United States, the right of lawyers to represent clients, the rights of free speech, press, and assemblage, the right of protest and remonstrance were denied workingmen, foreigners, and Communists. We found out that these rights were denied not only to them but to all men whose opinions or personalities were not agreeable to the ruling group controlling Bell and Harlan counties. As to the evictions from the county, the county attorney was asked whether he knew of any law which gave any public official the right to do anything more than to cause arrest in the event of disorder. He knew of no law but thought that evictions by force were legal.

The answer of the authorities to us was that the "mob" was in control, that the power of government could not protect us. If true, this means of course that civil rights no longer exist—that law is no longer supreme—that the Constitution means nothing in Harlan and Bell counties. There is reason to believe the officials are often part of the mob. But when the mob is not in control, there is a complete system of fascism, as dangerous to our institutions as communism. Men are jailed, bailed, granted or denied rights on the order of mayors, county attorneys, sheriffs, and other executive officers. Laws and regulations are made not by legislation but by those in control. The executives in this section are properly called "the law." A further question arises as to whether there is any method under our judicial system by which personal rights can be protected. We have brought an injunction suit and a damage suit in the federal court. The legal machinery is geared to assure order. Is there any to protect rights?

There is another side to the picture. These people have been pestered by unsympathetic investigations. They have come to feel they are defending fireside and religion against seditious "invaders." From their point of view the only help is to sell coal. They have never thought of the matter in terms of "freedom." At most they would overthrow liberty in order to maintain it. These people are fundamentalists in religion, politics, business, and everything else.

"There ain't no 'reign of terror,'" said a witness. Mr. Smith, county attorney, added, "It's a phrase coined by the 'Com*mun*ists.'"

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The Government Takes in Washing

By F. J. SCHLINK

IN an article in *The Nation* of November 11, 1931, the twisting of the work of government bureaus to the special service of business interests and the decline of such bureaus' concern with the problems of the taxpaying population as a whole were developed with significant examples of the curious and astigmatic economic policy and anti-consumer bias in important parts of the government service. Of the comments received, one or two indicated amazement at the facts reported and expressed doubt that the commercialization of the government service could be as crass and stupid as the article showed. The organized laundry-owners have furnished simple and clear-cut evidence of *their* connection with such operations in the following, taken from one of their recent bulletins:

> The Bureau of Standards has found the answer to the winter-damage problem. Winter damage is the degeneration of laundered cotton fabrics dried out of doors in the winter time in New England, caused by sulphuric acid coming from air pollution due to smoke. And while the Massachusetts Laundryowners Association gave some mighty splendid cooperation throughout, it should be remembered that the L. N. A., as the national organization of the laundry industry, *sold the bureau on the idea of undertaking the investigation. One of their very best chemists, John B. Wilkie, devoted virtually all of his time, over a period of two and one-half years, to this study. And it didn't cost the individual laundry-owner one red cent. If that isn't a cash dividend for the member, "thar simply ain't none."*

On another page of the association's journal this appears:

> The laundry industry is complimented and truly grateful to Dr. Julius Klein, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Commerce, in announcing a fifteen-minute broadcast over the national hook-up of about thirty stations of the Columbia System, to discuss the textile maintenance industries. In this, laundering will have an important place. The time—Sunday evening, February 28, at seven o'clock, Eastern Standard Time.
>
> Through headquarters and our Eastern representative we have been in touch with Dr. Klein for many months. He is in hearty accord with the activities of your association—recognizes the achievements of the organized laundry industry and now is about to pay us the highest compliment of recognition. . . .
>
> *Here indeed are dividends you want to cash—possible only because we have such a representative and worth-while National Association and Institute.*

This sidelight is from a later issue: ". . . material used by Dr. Klein in his broadcast was taken from specially prepared data supplied by the [laundry-owners'] Department of Public Relations." Under the head, "What the L. N. A. Does for You," appears: "Contacts the *Bureau of Standards,* the Federal Board for Vocational Education, the Census Bureau, and the *Department of Commerce* of the United States government"—that is, two contacts for the Bureau of Standards. (Italics in foregoing quotations are mine.)

But see what the ungrateful and inconsiderate laundrymen say on another page of their bulletin:

> Public demand for reduction in cost of government is forcibly being brought home to the Washington authorities. The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, through a special committee, has taken the government to task for business inefficiency and has demanded an immediate curtailment of federal expenditure of at least $500,000,000. Local chambers of commerce should follow the lead of the national, and demand of their State and local administrations curtailment of expenditure along proportionate lines.
>
> Taxpayers and voters must drive home to those whom they have placed in office that today their duty is to bring taxation down and not to seek ways and means of increasing existing tax burdens.

Does the laundry industry suppose that Business-Booster Klein and Chemist John B. Wilkie can devote their energies to the increase of profits in the laundry industry without any provision being made for paying their salaries from federal taxes? It is all very well for the laundry industry to glory in the generous and invaluable free services provided by complaisant government bureaus, but it is rank ingratitude, while accepting such services and boasting of the efficient lobbying which secured them, to demand reduction in the cost of government.

The free or nearly free services to the laundry-owners extend even into the field of the American Association of University Women, which is hearing "splendid talks" about the cost of doing the laundry at home, under the inspiration of a $100 gift to the fellowship fund of the A. A. U. W. This presumably is only one of a number of such activities by the Laundryowners National Association, for their *Bulletin* states:

> This Department of Public Relations, under the direction of Gordon T. Anders, handles contacts with women's clubs, home-economics teachers, luncheon clubs, etc., furnishing material, information, and articles for publication in connection with the power-laundry industry. Specially prepared material is constantly being released to local newspapers and general and business magazines.

Extending "business good-will" is not to be limited to operations through adult organizations and reading matter—the parents are to be won over through the delighted gurgles of their children. And, of course, children grow up, and in time they too must decide what to do about the laundry problem. A recent sales bulletin announces Peggy Ann's Own Story, "one of the sweetest stories ever told. . . . It is our sincere hope that this story of Peggy Ann may gladden the heart of some loved child, while at the same time pointing the way to greater happiness for Mother by giving her more hours of usefulness to devote to herself and her family." Then follows the story of the rag doll, Peggy Ann (the idea is clearly based on a story in "Raggedy Ann," a child's book), which was sent to the laundry and came back "even prettier than when it was brand spic-and-span new."

In New York City the organized laundry-owners' con-

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tribution to the public welfare, according to press reports recently appearing in considerable detail, consisted in making trouble in the delivery of laundry-operating supplies, such as soap, soda, bleach, for firms declining to join and, of course, to pay dues to the Laundrymen's Board of Trade. One witness is reported by the New York *Times* to have testified that "efforts were being made to induce all the laundry-owners to join the Laundry Board of Trade so that prices could be raised."

These items are presented in some detail because they are so typical of the anti-consumer operations of some of the better class of trade associations—which a little lower in the scale become common rackets. The laundry-owners' boasted propaganda activities with women's clubs, home economists, periodicals, and others closely parallel the shocking and intricately scheming practices of the trade associations of electric-power companies in subsidizing some college teachers and tricking others, and in writing and "correcting" textbooks in economics and civics. It is almost impossible, as industry is now organized, for a trade association to carry on aggressive work for its members without being driven by those members' interests and natural sympathies and alignments fast and far in the direction of influencing legislators, "keeping in touch with" government bureau chiefs, "contacting" college faculties, and "working very closely" with newspaper editors in their conduct of relations with authors and advertisers, and their editing and censorship of information vitally affecting the public interest. In fact, one function of the Laundryowners Association is stated to be "to defend . . . the industry from jibes and jabs of thoughtless writers, speakers, cartoonists, 'colyumists,' and advertisers." In carrying out this principle a virtual censorship, through economic and personal pressure, of vaudeville and legitimate actors, humorists, editors, and radio entertainers is assured. Indeed, a laundry association, in the intervals of some of its rougher and ruder duties, has attempted without success to apply some of this pressure to Consumers' Research, a non-profit-making organization providing unbiased information and counsel on goods and services bought by the ultimate consumer—including laundry service.

Planning for Power*

By MORRIS LLEWELLYN COOKE

THE collapse of the valuation and holding-company rackets and the emergence of the small consumer as the arbiter of power policy are the high points in the current utility situation. Transportation rates are less and less affected either by the cost or by the present value of property used and useful in rendering the service, while the electric, gas, and telephone industries consider unfair the basing of rates on the reproduction-cost basis which until the 1929 debacle was touted as the equitable "law of the land." Most of the important arguments heretofore advanced in favor of the holding companies have been exploded, and these companies are at grips with seemingly insuperable difficulties.

If electric rates, at present highly discriminatory against the small user, can be regulated so as to approach the standard of cost plus a fair profit, consumption can be so increased as not only to eliminate the drudgery of housework but to pave the way for a new artistry in living for even modest homes. Through low-priced current for the farms agriculture can be energized and the cultural level of our rural population radically improved.

In this atmosphere of change, planning offers great possibilities for a public conscious of its power and responding to competent leadership. Governor Roosevelt has given constant testimony to his realization of the importance of the power issue as it affects the social and economic well-being of the people and has moved effectively to clean up abuses and open the way for the new day. He initiated an illuminating investigation into State regulation by a legislative commission, has advocated prudent investment as the basis for valuation, and insists that public-service commissions are more administrative than judicial bodies. Through the St. Lawrence River Power Authority Act Governor Roosevelt secured for domestic and rural consumers the benefits of the low-priced electricity there to be generated. He contends that if the private companies are allowed to market St. Lawrence power, it must be on the basis of cost plus only a fair and recognized profit; otherwise the State may have to build its own transmission lines. As facilitating a balanced State power development Governor Roosevelt has proposed legislation permitting the voters of any area to provide publicly owned power facilities if they so desire. He advocates the federal regulation of interstate electric traffic.

Special interest attaches to public planning for the utilities because their activities can now legally be regulated by public authority. In this field many of the constitutional prohibitions against interference by public authority with private business do not hold. The most important appeals from commission and court findings in utility cases have been based on claims of confiscation sought to be resisted under the Fourteenth, or "due process," Amendment to the Constitution. Only those private undertakings invested—or as one typesetter put it "infested"—with a public interest may be regulated by public authority.

Possibly as much as one-fifth of the productive and transportation capacity of the country is now included in the utility or "regulated" classification. The relative importance of the major groups is indicated by their claimed capital investment and gross revenue for 1931 (with six zeros omitted):

	Capital Investment	*Gross Revenue*
Steam railroads	$24,078	$4,500
Electric light and power	12,400	2,137
Electric railways	5,500	1,300
Telephone	4,750	1,200
Manufactured gas	3,087	442

However, it is electricity which dominates the utility scene. While its claimed invested capital is only half that

* The seventh of a series of articles on national economic problems. The eighth, World Action for World Recovery, by Henry Hazlitt, will appear next week.—Editor The Nation.

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of steam railroads it is still in its youth. The electrical industry has achieved a solidarity of purpose and action as between its functional units, such as financing, operating, manufacturing, engineering, construction, and contracting; a representation in the major political party organizations; and a control of the means of mass propaganda and ballyhoo which set an all-time record. Its operating companies are as a rule in healthy financial condition and everything suggests that in times anything like normal the saturation-point in the use of electricity would not be in sight. It is in coping with the electrical industry and planning for it that the case of the People *vs.* the Utilities will be won or lost. Obviously, also, if we cannot plan effectively for electricity, it is unlikely that as a people we shall be equal to the task of broader social economic planning.

The enhanced position of electricity in American life is shown by the increase in its use from 110,000,000 K.W.H. a day in 1921 to 265,000,000 K.W.H. a day in 1929. This consumption has been divided as between large and small consumers during the five years of 1926-31 as indicated on Chart A. While the small consumers during this period have used but 30 per cent of the current, they have contributed 61 per cent of the revenues, as indicated by Chart B. On the other hand, the wholesale consumers, that is, the larger industries, the street railways, and the electrified steam railroads, have required 70 per cent of all current sold and yet have yielded only 39 per cent of the industry's total revenues. American industry is 70 per cent electrified. That the net revenues of the industry have held up well in the face of a heavy decrease in the use of industrial power tends to prove that the small user is the profitable and reliable consumer.

Practically the whole cost of service to a large consumer lies first in generating the electricity and then in transmitting it on high-voltage lines to the point of use. The cost of this "transmitted current" is of course the same whether delivered to a large industrial establishment or to one of the substations from which the current is distributed over wires of lower voltage to homes and farms. In order to get the entire cost of service to these small-scale users we must add to the cost of the "transmitted current" the capital charges and operating expenses required to put it through the distribution substation and the low-voltage distribution lines to the far side of the customers' meters. Thus the whole cost of domestic service will be the cost of transmitted current plus the distribution charges.

There are three classes of electric service into which distribution enters as an important cost factor, that is, domestic; commercial light and power, retail; and municipal, largely street lighting. The current consumed by each class and the revenue derived therefrom in 1931 were as follows:

	K.W.H.	*Revenue*
Domestic	11,785,000,000	$686,000,000
Commercial light and power	13,837,000,000	569,000,000
Municipal and street lighting	2,793,000,000	108,000,000
	28,415,000,000	$1,363,000,000

We may assume that the "transmitted current" used in these services costs on the average 1½ cents per K.W.H., including return on invested capital. The national average rate for wholesale transmitted power is 1.42 cents per K.W.H. The part of the sales price, therefore, attributable to 28,415,000,000 K.W.H. of current would total $426,225,000. Subtracting this from the $1,363,000,000 charged for these services, there remains $936,775,000 to be justified as the cost, including profit, of distribution, or nearly one-half of the total revenues of the industry. If, as suggested by my own studies carried on continuously for nearly twenty years and outlined in "On the Cost of Distribution of Electricity" and elsewhere, this public outlay for distribution is about twice what it should be, we are confronted with an annual overcharge against the small consumer of between $400,000,000 and $500,000,000 a year.

Certainly $900,000,000 a year is far too large a tax to be levied without reasonable proof of its approximate justice. And yet there is an almost complete absence of anything approximating cost control or even of cost knowledge concerning electrical distribution, and not one generally recognized cost standard. Practices and results obtained in different areas cannot be compared. The usual process of improving methods by setting one up against another is therefore generally missing. Waste necessarily results.

Engineering literature teems with meticulous data on generating costs. We know within narrow limits the cost of transmitting current. But we have no information about an item which would come near to balancing the national budget and which is certainly much more important to the small consumer than the costs of generation and transmission combined. The cost of the distribution of electricity is taboo before every engineering society in the United States. This lack of definite data in regard to distribution costs accounts for the present meaningless multiplicity of rate schedules. Before many years a single rate schedule will cover vast areas.

Through propaganda fostered by the electrical industry the public has been led to believe that domestic electric rates have been "steadily going down." The nation-wide average price fell from 7 cents per K.W.H. in 1926 to 6 cents in 1931. This drop in the national average chiefly affects, however, only that very small percentage of customers whose exceptionally large consumption gives them the benefit of low promotional rates. Such lowering of the national average has very little bearing on the trend of rates paid in the majority—possibly 90 per cent—of American homes.

The revenue derived from the average domestic user increases yearly. It was $29.70 in 1926 and $33.70 in 1931. It is highly probable that the industry has secured a greater profit per domestic customer, and per K.W.H. used in domestic service, with each drop in the national average. For in serving the average domestic customer with the small annual increments in the quantity of current indicated in recent years, practically the only added expense is for the current itself. Computing this at 1½ cents per K.W.H. we find that in each of the last five years the amount required to cover the additional current averages only about half the added revenue received.

Until within the last two or three years, except for the supervision of the Interstate Commerce Commission over the railroads, public authority has hardly been felt in the utility world. Barring a few sporadic instances of gentle discipline, and these confined to a few States, the utilities have been allowed to work out their own salvation, if you

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can call it that. Electrically speaking, Sidney Z. Mitchell was Alpha and Samuel Insull was Omega. An occasional Hopson was the only fly in the ointment. But the substitution by Governor Roosevelt of Maltbie for Prendergast as chairman of the New York Commission, the recent appointment of Lilienthal in Wisconsin, the activities of Seavey in California and of Morse in New Hampshire, and the refusal of the Massachusetts Commission to allow the Boston Edison split-up are happenings which serve to remind the general public of what was originally expected of regulation.

Things have also been occurring in the public-ownership field. When gas and electricity supplies and telephone services were confined to single localities, thousands of such plants were publicly owned. Coincident with the interconnection of these utilities over wide areas, the private interests initiated a process of eliminating the competition of the public plant. More than forty years ago Edison advised the electrical industry to insure the permanency of its investment "by keeping prices so low that there is no inducement to others to come in and ruin it." Because this advice has not been heeded, strong and apparently effective public-ownership currents have been set up in various parts of the country. There are well-managed publicly owned electric plants of considerable size in Seattle and Tacoma, Washington; Los Angeles and Pasadena, California; Springfield, Illinois; Jamestown, New York; Holyoke, Massachusetts; and Jacksonville, Florida. There are at present more than 2,000 such municipal electric plants—most of them quite small.

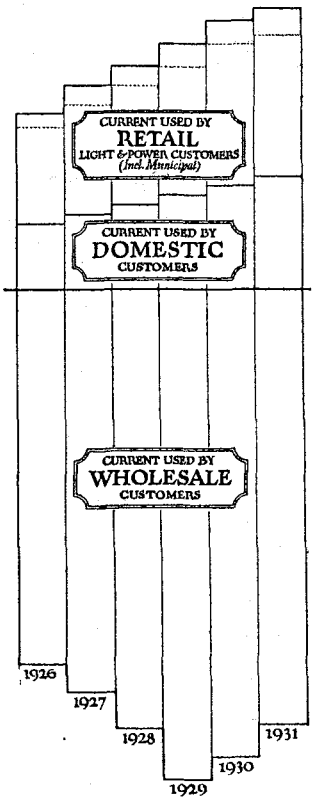

CHART A. WHERE THE ELECTRICITY GOES

Wholesale customers use 70 per cent of all the electricity generated.

(Each inch represents approximately 20 billion K.W.H.)

But far more significant is the legislation already passed in Nebraska, Wisconsin, Washington, and Oregon, and proposed in New York by Governor Roosevelt, to facilitate the tying together of individual municipal gas and electric plants into power districts technically and otherwise able to compete with privately owned superpower systems. All legal barriers against providing a public plant, once the people have voted for it, should be removed. Nothing has proved so effective in securing reasonable rates from the private companies as the realization that the public has this remedy at hand.

Except as to water supplies, public ownership in this country is of the "yardstick" variety. While in any one industry the percentage of public as compared with private plants is low, such public installations as there are exert an important influence in providing the public with the standards by which performance of the private plants can be measured. I am convinced that it would be a mistake to plan now for widespread public ownership in this country. Rather we should concentrate on the effective operation of a few favorably located installations, large enough to fire the public imagination and to exclude petty politics. The water-power projects at Boulder Dam, on the St. Lawrence, and at Muscle Shoals should be pushed, and experiments should be made in extended but intrastate power districts; these are already under way in western Washington and are being actively planned in Wisconsin.

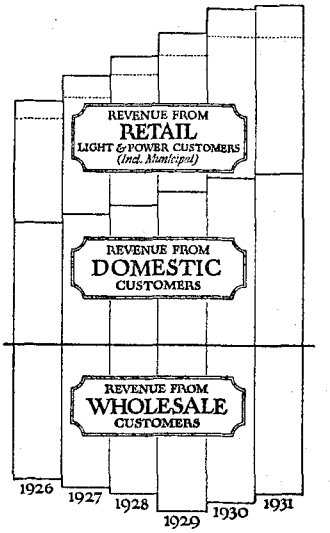

CHART B. WHERE THE ELECTRIC REVENUES COME FROM

Householders and other small users provide 61 per cent of the revenues but only use 30 per cent of the current.

(Each inch represents approximately 800 million dollars.)

On the other hand, in the light of the experience during two generations, it would be a mistake to place too much reliance on either federal or State regulation. The Interstate Commerce Commission has on the whole done a remarkably good job in its piloting of the difficult railroad situation. The early adoption of standardized and revealing accounting, reasonable success in keeping politics at a distance, and the presence on the commission almost from the start of some unusually able men are among the contributing causes. But the end seems not far off. Especially in case the depression continues, it appears to be only a question of how long most of the steam roads can hold out. Bonded as they are to the hilt and with no market for their stocks, the solution will inevitably be public ownership, not because it is desirable in itself, but because it has become inevitable. Public ownership the world over has usually come by this route.

But "yardstick" public ownership and regulation will have to be supplemented by fundamental and extensive research conducted under public auspices as a guide to future public planning. There is no such thing as scientific management without unprejudiced research. To meet this need Governor Pinchot suggested a giant power board instructed to study out Pennsylvania's electrical future. This idea has since been carried out in Great Britain by the appointment of the Central Electricity Board. It has been effectively active in executing projects looking toward a better planning of Britain's electrical economy—its duties are wholly outside regulation as we know it. The Wisconsin legislature at its last session followed the suggestion of Governor La Follette and provided for a similar board to study the future power needs of the State, to plan the facilities and agencies found to be necessary, and to plot the method for coordinating all public and private power and light activities.

A federal utilities planning board, unhampered by the routine regulatory responsibilities which harass the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Power Com-

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mission, and supplemented by similar agencies in a half-dozen States, might in time clarify the questions which keep regulation relatively ineffective. Ability to require the facts in any given situation would be all the power needed by such an agency. The field and function of transmission lines, especially those of the higher voltages, is of the most immediate importance to electrical development. It is highly probable that the cheapest power sources cannot be tapped except by government-owned lines or at least by lines owned by private concerns operating only in the transmission field.

Until recently the ascertainment of the cost of electrical distribution in any given situation seemed all but a hopeless task. With a minimum of detached inquiry it now seems probable that a generally applicable formula can be derived. The motor-transport industries—street and interurban electric lines, subway and elevated railroads, bus and truck and taxicab operators—struggle more or less blindly to protect and advance special interests when many of the misconceptions upon which their controversies feed could be dispelled by the dispassionate assembly of facts, many of them quite near the surface. Another profitable field for planning inquiry is suggested by the recent rapid development of interstate natural gas lines, now lying, with interstate electrical transmission lines, entirely beyond regulatory control. Several of our public-service commissions have recently instituted research bureaus, but naturally they are chiefly occupied with studies immediately bearing on cases pressing for decision.

Perhaps from the standpoint of national well-being nothing in the utility field is more insistently important than the effective maintenance of a first-class national transportation system. But this provided for, plentiful, widely distributed, low-cost electricity will in the long run prove to be one of the master indices of our economic, social, and cultural development. We begin to see the manifold ways in which abundant low-cost electricity may directly affect home life. But it is not so clear to industrialists, or to those in the electrical industry itself, how rapidly electricity is permeating our machine age, so that it is becoming an electrical rather than a mechanical age. The first automatic industry is here. The necessity for human effort has entirely disappeared from the generation of electricity. By merely touching buttons we have illimitable power at our disposal. Eight men on a shift watch 500,000 electrical horse-power developed above the Saguenay!

This factor of automaticity is increasing in every industry. The assembly line at the Ford plant with its hustlers at every point is cited as the fine flower of mass production. Yet Henry Ford is quoted as saying that he will promptly transform it into a vast machine requiring no human effort —merely control—as soon as the increased demand for his cars warrants it. Power can spell freedom for the race. But without planning, it may easily be our undoing.

What Is a Poet?

By MARK VAN DOREN

POETRY speaks for itself. But poets, curiously enough, do not; and so it is time that someone speak for them and say what they would say if they spoke in prose. It is time that they be defended against the silent charge—all the more damning because it is so silent—that they are a special race of men and women, different from all other creatures of their kind and possessed of faculties which would make them, if we knew them, only too wonderful to live with, not to say too embarrassing. I should like to relieve them from the burden of being queer. Poets are supposed to be a suffering race, but the only thing they suffer from is the misapprehension that they are endowed with a peculiar set of thoughts and feelings—particularly feelings—and that these endowments are of the romantic sort. It consists, to speak for the moment historically, in the notion that the poet has always and must always cut the same figure he has cut during the past hundred years or so. It consists in expecting him to be a Shelley, a Keats, a Byron, a Poe, a Verlaine, a Swinburne, a Dowson. He may be another one of those, to be sure; but he also may be any kind of person under the sun. My only conception of the poet is that he is a person who writes poetry. That may sound absurdly simple, but it is arrived at after reflection upon the innumerable kinds of poetry which poets have written, and upon the baffling variety of temperaments which these poets have revealed.

Here is the figure we have set up. A pale, lost man with long, soft hair. Tapering fingers at the ends of furtively fluttering arms. An air of abstraction in the delicate face, but more often a look of shy pain as some aspect of reality—a real man or woman, a grocer's bill, a train, a load of bricks, a newspaper, a noise from the street—makes itself manifest. He is generally incompetent. He cannot find his way in a city, he forgets where he is going, he has no aptitude for business, he is childishly gullible and so the prey of human sharks, he cares nothing for money, he is probably poor, he will sacrifice his welfare for a whim, he stops to pet homeless cats, he is especially knowing where children are concerned (being a child himself), he sighs, he sleeps, he wakes to sigh again. The one great assumption from which the foregoing portrait is drawn is an assumption which thousands of otherwise intelligent citizens go on. It is the assumption that the poet is more sensitive than any other kind of man, that he feels more than the rest of us and is more definitely the victim of his feeling.

I am tempted to assert that the poet is as a matter of fact less sensitive than other men. I shall make no such assertion for the simple reason that to do so would be to imply that I knew what kind of man the poet necessarily was. My whole point is that the poet is not anything necessarily. He may be sensitive, and he may not; the question has nothing directly to do with his being a poet. Certainly there have been poets with very thick hides. We have to account for the fact that Browning looked more like a business man than he did like a poet—whatever a poet is supposed to look like; that Horace was plump, phlegmatic, easy-going, shrewd, and sensible; that Dryden was an excellent trader in literary affairs; that Pope was so insensitive, at least to the sufferings of others, that he poured an emetic

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into the tea of a publisher with whom he had quarreled; that Li Po and most of the other great Chinese poets were government officials; that Robert Frost is to all outward appearances—and what other appearances are there?—a New England farmer.

There is reason for supposing that no artist is as sensitive in one respect as the man who is not an artist. He is not so likely, that is, to be overwhelmed by his own feelings. Consider what he does with his feelings. He uses them, deliberately, for the purposes of his art. The ordinary man—meaning for the moment the man who is not an artist—may be so affected by the death of a parent, for instance, that he becomes dumb. There was Daudet, however, who at the funeral of his mother could not help composing the room where he stood into a room that would be the setting of a new story. He was using his feelings, together with the scene which called them forth, for an ulterior purpose. The artist is callous, and must be so in order to keep his mind clear for the work he has before him. So also the poet must be sensitive to words, rhythms, ideas, and moods; but in the very act of perceiving them clearly, in realizing them for what they are worth, he distinguishes himself from the race of men who feel and only feel. When we read the poetry of a man like Pope who was extraordinarily, almost abnormally, susceptible to the charms of verbal music we can have no doubt that he was, in that one department of his existence, all sense. We are not justified, however, in going on, as a recent biographer of the little man has done, to attribute to him a sensitive heart. As a matter of fact he had another kind, and in the ordinary man it would be denounced as an ugly one.

From the notion that the poet is deeply affected by life we often proceed to the notion that he cannot stand a great deal of it; we say he dies young. To be sure there are the English romantic poets—Shelley, Keats, and Byron—to support our error, and to be sure they are always conspicuously present in spirit when poetry is under discussion, since it was their generation that gave us our conception of poetry and the poet; we still are in the romantic period. But even as we talk this way we seem to forget their contemporary Wordsworth, who lived in perfect peace till he was eighty. We forget that Dryden lived to seventy, Shakespeare to fifty-two, Browning to seventy-seven, Tennyson to eighty-three, Milton to sixty-six, Herrick to eighty-three, Spenser to almost fifty, and Chaucer to an even sixty. We disregard the great age of Homer when he died, at least if the traditions be true. And anyway the ancient traditions about poets have their significance. For one of them was that poets die old; hence the bust of Homer, wrinkled, composed, resigned, with sunken eyes. The three great tragic poets of Greece died old indeed; Aeschylus at sixty-nine, Sophocles at ninety, and Euripides at seventy-five. Vergil and Horace gave up the struggle in their fifties, Lucretius committed suicide, it is said, at forty-three or forty-four, and Catullus, like Shelley, was extinguished at thirty; but Ovid, for all his banishment to a cold, uncomfortable part of the world, and his probable suffering there, lived into his sixtieth year; and Ennius, first of all the known Roman poets, saw seventy. Dante had a hard life, but it lasted fifty-six years. Racine went on to sixty; Goethe expired peacefully, calling for more light, at eighty-three. And what of the greatest English poet in recent times? Thomas Hardy, who did not even begin to be a professional poet until he was more than fifty-five, wrote ten volumes of verse after that, and when he died at eighty-eight was busy with the preparation of a new volume, which appeared posthumously!

Another burden of which I should like to relieve poets is the burden of being strangely wise. They have been called prophets, I believe, and seers; clairvoyants, informers, transformers, and what not. All this, too, in spite of the impracticality attributed to them. Indeed, there seems to be a connection between the two attributes. The poets know nothing of the world, but they may tell us a good deal about life; not life as we live it, but life—shall we say?—as we ought to live it. Simply by virtue of their stupidity in ordinary affairs they somehow become conversant with extraordinary affairs which we ourselves shall never experience but which it might be rather nice to hear about. So runs another legend, and one as romantic as the rest. For it has no foundation whatever if the whole history of poetry be taken into account. In a primitive tribe the poet is also the medicine man, the priest, and the foreteller of future events, since it is in verse that these functionaries speak. Among savages, then, the poet is a prophet. But nowhere else. The division of labor has gone on; the prophet is the prophet, in verse or in prose as the occasion may be; the poet is the poet, and always in verse. The poet is a sayer, nor a seer. Wordsworth brought on a considerable confusion by insisting that the poet is one who goes to Nature for her secrets, which are substantially the secrets of existence, and then comes back with the dew of knowledge on his lips. The poet, in other words, is equipped with a peculiar mind which enables him to plumb—or fathom, or penetrate, or see through, or pierce; the phrase matters not—the world's appearances. For us the mere appearances, for him the reality behind. Thus he not only cursed his successors with the responsibility of being prophets; he cursed them also with the duty of being acquainted with Nature, and of pretending to some sort of mastery over her. The truth, I suspect, is that the poet is no more of a magician in this respect than the scientist is. And think of the poets, long ago and since, who have never been the least bit interested in the out-of-doors. Dr. Johnson said that he was unable to tell the difference between one green field and another. Milton got his flowers and mountains out of old books; Spenser got his landscapes out of sixteenth-century woodcuts; Dante read Nature as a work in theology; Horace was comfortable in the presence of his hills only when a few friends from Rome were with him to drink wine and make remarks about life; Vergil in the country was concerned with husbandry and the diseases of sheep; Ovid would not look at a tree unless it had once contained a nymph.

The poet may think anything, feel anything, do anything; he may or may not be a wanderer; he may or may not love his home better than any other plot of ground; he may love children; he may hate them; he may be restless under the pressure of a domestic establishment; he may get his chief joy out of a wife and kitchen; he may inhabit a palace; he may shiver in a garret; he may be noble; he may be mean. He is not limited, in other words, more than other men. Yet we go on limiting him. And to what? To a simpering, humorless, pious, nervous existence which for all the world we should be unwilling to share with him. No wonder we don't like him, and no wonder we don't really enjoy reading poetry.

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In the Driftway

ONE of the saddest of sad stories about the prevailing depression came to the Drifter's ears the other day. "If you want to know about the book business," said his informant, "don't ask the publishers. Ask the bookbinders." The bookbinders, it appears, store copies of books already published but not yet demanded for sale at bookstores. At present the bookbinders are holding 5,000,000 unsold novels; 5,000,000 unsold "serious" books (with apologies to the novelists); and from 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 sets of unbound sheets which have not even risen to the dignity of being placed between boards. If this is not enough to discourage budding authors, not to mention those already in full flower, it is hard to see what would. But it reminds the Drifter of another story. A young man had just finished a dissertation for the Ph.D. which his university was about to publish. The business arrangements were just about completed when the official for the university press had another thought. "Of course," said he, "you'll have to make arrangements to cart away these books at the end of a year. *We* can't have them cluttering up our shelves indefinitely."

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THIS need not, however, prove a completely discouraging fact for young writers to remember. They may remember, also, the story that Henry David Thoreau told on himself. At his publishers' request he removed the unsold portion of the edition of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers." Seven hundred copies of that work thereby came into his possession and for years they were piled in the Concord attic, gathering dust. The Drifter does not know what became of them. He does know that he reads the "Week" with much quiet pleasure. And Thoreau, far from being forgotten because his books did not sell, is an American classic.

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WHAT all this proves, the Drifter is not certain. There will be authors who bitterly complain that critics ignore them because their sales run up into the hundreds of thousands. There are others who believe that if they could break through the wall of no-sales and really get their immortal thoughts before the public they would achieve the fame they deserve. Fame is a curious and unpredictable jade. "The Scarlet Letter" was immediately popular and had a large sale. Melville, although his "Moby Dick" had a modest constant sale as a sea story, was rediscovered as a great writer in 1920, nineteen years after his death, when he was almost forgotten. And there was no edition of Robert Herrick's poems from the time they were first published in 1648 until 1810, 162 years later. It is interesting to speculate what contemporary writers who today are considered inescapably marked for immortality will still be flourishing in 162 years. Where will be our Dreisers, our Lewises, our Sinclairs, our Cathers in the year 2,094? One raises the question almost fearfully, for then we (the Drifter uses the term in its generic sense only) shall be on the threshold of the twenty-second century, A. D. And while we are asking, what will A. D. mean then? THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Repeal Prohibition: A Few Words from the Drys

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am a teetotaler and consider the man who drinks a fool. But I have been opposed to the prohibition amendment for years. Like *The Nation* I think we must have a new start and get prohibition eventually by the old but very effective temperance propaganda which the idiotic W. C. T. U. and Anti-Saloon League dropped for the broad and easy legislative road to hell.

Do you know what will happen if prohibition is repealed? The liquor business will immediately start again. Shallow-minded people like Al Smith will talk about easing the tax burden with government partnership in the liquor traffic, which amounts to *The Nation's* idea, and we will again have just what we had before—the saloon, high license that will still make bootlegging profitable as it was before, and with the high license the old and vicious excuse for urging liquor on more people.

The Nation is a strong believer in freedom. When it comes to literary censorship, you are willing to have the courage of your convictions. Why are you not equally willing when it comes to booze? I say: Let the government make and sell booze, all kinds of booze, *at cost,* to anyone who wants to buy it, with no restrictions whatever except that it could not be consumed on the premises of the agency or in hotel dining-rooms. The laws against drunkenness could then be strengthened so that a man caught driving and even smelling of liquor would lose his car, and an arrest for drunkenness would involve probation and surveillance. After a certain number of arrests for drunkenness a man would automatically be banished to the island of Yap, where the government would furnish free liquor and food and the damn fools would be permitted to drink themselves to death.

Booze has no medical, scientific, social, or psychological excuse for existence. All arguments to the contrary are mere rationalization. But we will never begin to solve the liquor problem so long as its existence is aided and abetted by a dime of profit for the government or anyone else.

Tulsa, Okla., May 4 C. R. LONG

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In view of the usual sound judgment of *The Nation,* based upon adequate evidence and reason, I am at a loss to understand your editorial of May 4 on the Eighteenth Amendment. Momentously announcing a reversal of policy on this issue, you proceed to give just two reasons for that change: (1) that the elimination of the Eighteenth Amendment will "remove this issue from the arena of immediate politics"; and (2) that the increased violations of the law and the present intolerable conditions are due to "the hopelessness of obtaining enforcement from the government in this era."

In regard to the first statement, partial refutation is found in your own argument at a later juncture. Your proposal that Congress present to State conventions a substitute amendment would nicely keep this issue in "immediate politics" for from seven to ten years to come. It would mean a long, terrific *political* fight. But even if Congress passed such an amendment and the requisite number of States approved, would the question be out of politics? Far from it! Then begins again the long struggle to determine another system of control, with intrenched

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liquor interests utilizing every political advantage to secure legislation to insure their profits.

In your second reason you place responsibility for the present intolerable situation not on the amendment itself as law, but on the administration of it—which is, I believe, right. You despair of the present Administration and its successor; therefore, you say, annul the amendment the government does not will to enforce. On this basis, is not the move for repeal alliance with a government which has betrayed the law? Should not our concern be with purging the government of hypocritical leaders and a corrupt party, rather than with eliminating unenforced laws?

MAYNARD CASSADY

University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y., May 4

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: From your editorial of May 4 I gather that *The Nation* favors personal temperance and believes that the drink traffic is one of the greatest of evils. But enforcement is growing weaker and will continue to do so under the government of a "collapsing economic system." There is no hope for improvement; therefore *The Nation* joins those who urge the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. You propose no substitute system to achieve control of the evil liquor traffic.

You must recognize the partial responsibility of *The Nation* for the enforcement situation which you deplore. You criticize the hypocrisy and corruption of officials but fail to show the fundamental difficulty—namely, the lack of popular conviction that the consumption of liquor is personally and socially harmful. Though a subscriber to *The Nation* for ten years, I can recall no editorial or article devoted to showing *Nation* readers the social evils of the consumption of alcoholic beverages and on that ground urging personal temperance and support of the Eighteenth Amendment (please correct me if I am wrong). It would be amusing, if it were not tragic, to hear you say you will "*continue* to fight . . . for the *reeducation* of the country in the direction of temperance" (italics mine), when you have not yet begun!

ROBERT B. PETTINGILL

University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz., May 8

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Pained and puzzled was one "constant reader" of *The Nation* as he read Repeal the Eighteenth Amendment in Number 3487—pained by its confusion of liberalism with liquor; puzzled by its artless credulity.

The Nation's estimate of the degree of non-enforcement is, I fear, sadly out of perspective. Be that as it may, what better plan has *The Nation* to offer? "Liquor control of the government," such as certain Canadian provinces enjoy, or simply a Raskobian "return of the problem to the States"? Without a definite plan of liquor-business regulation how can *The Nation* conscientiously advocate a referendum on repeal? Why get rid of what we have until something better is proposed?

Moreover, I think that we who worked and prayed for national prohibition are justified in saying to the pro-temperance but anti-prohibition people: "We had a long, hard road to travel. No special methods of changing the Constitution were proposed to us when we were fighting for the outlawry of the liquor traffic. All we had to do was elect enough Congressmen and Senators to propose a prohibition amendment, by a two-thirds' vote in each house, to forty-eight State legislatures, and elect enough legislators who saw things our way to ratify the amendment in thirty-six of the forty-eight States. If good sportsmanship is in you, show what you can do under the same rules that prevailed when we were out and you were in. And if you win, we will gladly answer to the referendum roll call."

Cincinnati, Ohio, May 3 LYNDON B. PHIFER

Finance

Banks and "Relief"

THE plan proposed by Senator Robinson to spend $2,300,000,000 of federal money on unemployment relief and made work, and modified by the Administration with a view to having the expenditures handled by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, has a direct bearing on the effort already being made by the Federal Reserve banks to stimulate business. It will be recalled that the Reserve banks about the middle of April set out to buy approximately $100,000,000 of government securities each week, and have been maintaining that rate of purchase ever since. As recently set forth in this column, the underlying idea was that private banks and individuals, by selling their government bonds to the Federal Reserve, would bring about an accumulation of idle money, or surplus banking reserves, which would soon be compelled to seek employment through commercial loans or investment in corporate bonds.

In order to succeed, however, it has been obvious that the output of new bonds by the Treasury must be held to a smaller total than the Reserve banks' purchases. For if private banks and individuals, or the Reserve banks themselves, are called upon to absorb increasing amounts of new issues, the surplus which otherwise would be theoretically forced into business channels will merely flow to the Treasury, to be employed in government work instead of privately initiated work. It has been said in connection with the relief plan now to the fore that no additional government borrowing will be involved. The mathematics of this is too much for the present writer.

Government security prices broke sharply on the announcement of the Robinson plan, for if large additional Treasury issues are to be sold they will probably have to bear a higher rate of interest than outstanding obligations. Even before this occurred, however, the operation of the Federal Reserve program was taking a curious course. Banks in the smaller centers, and other institutions and individuals, did take the opportunity to sell their government obligations, and surplus bank reserves began to accumulate at a rapid rate at New York, amounting to more than $150,000,000 in a recent week. Big-city banks, which issue weekly reports of condition, did buy a moderate amount of general securities, totaling $48,000,000 between April 13 and the latest available report. But these banks, instead of selling their "governments" to the Federal Reserve, took a tip from that institution's program and proceeded to buy more of these securities for their own account. Member banks added $262,000,000 to their holdings during the period under review.

Indeed, why not? If any securities were headed for higher prices, government issues were, under the stimulus of Reserve Bank buying. There were few other investments which looked tempting to bankers, who already had heavy losses on many of their holdings and who entertained grave fears that prices might go still lower. As for extending additional commercial loans, a general movement in this direction was hardly possible as long as there was a pronounced movement in the opposite direction—that is, toward contraction of existing loans.

This is not to say that the Reserve Bank program must certainly prove ineffective. But it will surely prove ineffective unless it is accompanied by a revival of hope and confidence. Credit can be forced from hand to hand up to a certain point; but if somewhere in the chain stands a man who does not pass on to his neighbor the money he receives—that is, does not spend it—the flow halts at that point.

S. PALMER HARMAN

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Books and Drama

Too Much Learning

By SONIA RUTHELE NOVAK

Now Lazarus has cast on me the stare
He brought back from the tomb where he lay dead
Three days and nights. The knowledge he found there
Has put its blight on me, and well it's said
That I am strangely dolorous. But where
Is place for laughter in the scheme that's led
Its devastation through his gaze to bare
The mystery? And what is there instead
Of nothingness? And seeing, who can care
For warmth that cools in birth? Delusions bred
In ignorance no longer seem to wear
Reality as phantoms feast and wed!
The look that Lazarus has cast on me
Obliterates with its infinity.

The South Americans

Latin-American Problems. By Thomas F. Lee. Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $2.50.

The Struggle for South America. By J. F. Normano. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

The Coming of South America. By Henry Kittredge Norton. The John Day Company. $3.50.

Modern South America. By C. W. Domville Fife. J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.50.

THESE four volumes seek to give a better understanding of Latin America. Mr. Lee's reveals a curious dualism not unnatural in one who has had twenty-nine years' intimate contacts with our Southern neighbors, and views them varyingly as a friendly and *simpático* human being and as an engineer and investment banker yearning to "develop" the undeveloped. Thus, stressing *race* as a little understood differentiating factor in many countries which North Americans mistakenly think of as *Latin* American, he wisely sees that in Peru and Ecuador—and he might have included Mexico, Guatemala, and Bolivia—it is upon the Indian elements that the future cultural and political institutions must be built, and that the people of tropic Latin America "in time will regain the tempo of its ancient civilization and the flower of its ancient culture; but not until it has absorbed and rendered impotent the imposed civilization and culture of Europe." But two chapters later he feels that only "European immigration of the right stock" will bring about political and economic improvement. Likewise he believes that our most helpful attitude is to give our neighbors not money and material things but sympathetic appreciation of their experiments, and that we should "above everything give them their own way." Yet elsewhere he remarks that "the hundred million people of Latin America [offer] the greatest opportunity for market development," and that it will be our function to supply the capital.

While avoiding censure, Mr. Lee's account of how American investors in Latin American bonds were fleeced is devastating to the repute of his fellow investment bankers. "*We* loaned them," says he (italics mine), "a billion four hundred million dollars in some thirty-six months—not because it was safe and profitable from our standpoint or really helpful to them, but because the securities could be passed on to willing investors and a selling profit made by this transaction." The bankers' $415,000 bribe to President Leguia's son to secure the Peruvian loan of 1928, he declares, was long known to "the Street," though revealed only recently to the public through Congressional investigation. He tells how Brazilian statistics were doctored to make an unfavorable trade balance favorable, and how bonds were unloaded on the American public on the basis of these misleading statistics. These practices he euphemistically terms "what appear to have been lapses from conventional precaution," and says that hereafter "our investors will know what to look for." It may be doubted. The fact—which Mr. Lee does not mention—is that the American public bought those bonds on the strength of the credit, standing, and responsibility of the great banking and investment houses which sponsored those flotations—J. and W. Seligman; Dillon, Read and Company; the Equitable Trust, and the rest. What our investors do not know how to look for is a trustworthy investment-banking house. The biggest and best—as they were then rated—were *participes* in a handling of "other people's money" which makes the Ponzi venture—from which subscribers recovered 37½ per cent of their capital—seem almost gilt-edged by comparison.

Dr. Normano brings a vast fund of information and research to his study of the commercial rivalry for South American markets. He hails the contemporary transformation as a "farewell to medievalism." To him the continent's impending industrialization and the "continued ingression of the money economy" are hopeful portents. While he is aware that "a ceaseless opposition to official pan-Americanism is growing" and that the congresses under the auspices of Washington's Pan-American Union are viewed in the Southern Hemisphere as "congresses of mice presided over by a cat," he believes that anti-Yankeeism is purely an intellectual movement and of small dimensions. His thesis of the beneficence, as well as the acceptability, of capitalist penetration is somewhat weakened by the bias in such sentences as "And Jenks is sullenly compelled to concede that it is not a question of . . . imperialism, but 'we must see in the history of our enterprises in Cuba a new type of international relations.'" The chapter illustrating the symbiosis of Afro-Hispanic and Anglo-American cultures on the island of Cuba is useful in its concept but weakened by the author's evident attempt to prove a case. Inaccuracies (the foregoing passage from Jenks's "Our Cuban Colony" is misquoted and the wrong page is referred to in the footnotes, while other quotations are similarly garbled and incorrect as to page number), occasional grammatical slips, a rather hectic and staccato style, as well as the absence of a much-needed bibliography and index, detract somewhat from the usefulness of this painstaking compilation.

Mr. Norton has given us a genial survey, including a useful account of the recent revolutions which overturned the governments of the five larger South American nations. Of the Bolivian uprising he declares that it did not bring to a head or settle any economic conflict, and that it represented no shift of political control from left to right or vice versa. One is entitled to suspect that this is pretty much the story in all of them—although Peru seems clearly to be moving, as has Mexico, away from feudalism and toward Indianism. Obviously, if the world economic crisis continues, Latin America is likely, with all the world, to share movements definitely to the left or right.

Mr. Norton emphasizes that the term "Latin America" is a misnomer of French origin, and that it is resented in the countries of temperate South America. Both to avoid confusion to ourselves and offense to their inhabitants, we should, he declares, consider them as Chileans, Argentines, Brazilians, and Uruguayans. So far, so good. But when Mr. Norton further asserts: "These countries are as individual as France and Ger-

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many, Italy and Switzerland," he carries his thesis too far. Considerable differences, arising from physiographic and climatic factors, varying ethnic composition, and historical variants, there are, of course, between adjacent South American peoples. But common denominators are impressively present. To assert that Argentina and Uruguay, or Argentina and Chile, differ as much from each other as France from Germany, or either from Italy, is a manifest overstatement, evidence of which lies, indeed, in the author's subject matter. Can one conceive of a contemporary synthesis on the "coming" or "passing" of Europe, of a book dealing collectively with the trends in the four mentioned, and other, European countries?

Mr. Fife's is a historical and travel compendium based on the observations of a journalist and on secondary sources. It is well written and illustrated and above the average of its type.

ERNEST GRUENING

Not Quite Aspasia

Adventures of a Novelist. By Gertrude Atherton. Liveright. $4.

A FEW years ago Mrs. Atherton met Mrs. James Brown Potter, whom she calls "in her day the most beautiful woman on the American stage." Mrs. Potter was clairvoyant, and after their first meeting she went into a sort of trance and declared that Mrs. Atherton had been Aspasia in another incarnation—not to mention, also, Ninon de l'Enclos. Mrs. Atherton disposes of this notion gaily enough; she really does not believe in reincarnation. But the notion was sufficiently striking for her immediately to be seized with the idea of writing a book on Aspasia and Pericles, and "The Immortal Marriage" followed in due course.

Mrs. Atherton was probably not Aspasia. One reaches this conclusion after reading the almost six hundred pages of her autobiography. She describes her childhood in San Francisco, and by her own confession she was the most ill-tempered, spoiled brat of a female child that ever lived. She rather prides herself on this brattishness, and it reappears from time to time in her subsequent life. She is disdainful, ungenerous, undisciplined; she has no heart—not for her numerous suitors, not for the uncle and aunt who tried to keep her while she was attending school, not for her mother from whom she snatched George Atherton to be her husband, not for a dozen other persons in a dozen situations when kindness and tenderness would have been the usual emotions. I suppose she would explain this want of feeling by the notion that she was, after all, a genius, and geniuses make their own laws and their own justifications.

But if she was without feeling, as many times herself she says, she was filled with an unquenchable and energetic ambition. It took her restlessly all over the world, from San Francisco to Greece, from Denmark to the Virgin Islands, from London to Munich to Paris to New York. It took her to every fashionable dinner table from one end of Christendom to the other. It brought her into contact with every great man and every famous woman whose name appeared often in the public prints. And finally, and not by any means least importantly, it made her plunge from one novel to another, as she plunged from one locale to another, for nearly fifty years.

Not quite Aspasia, then, but undeniably a woman of power. A woman who sought and found her place among the comfortable, smart, dashing persons who governed the London of the nineties. Her acquaintances included the Balfours, the Bryces, the Churchills, several duchesses, a flock of ambassadors; she knew the artistic and literary elite: the Bellocs, Ambrose Bierce, Henry James, Whistler, even Hardy, who was so wanting in the social graces as to insist on talking of San Francisco tram cars until she fled him in despair. She makes more than one of these bright figures memorable: her mother, standing by the bed sewing; her scholarly grandfather; her Spanish mother-in-law; Ernest Dowson, minus his front teeth and a pitiful sot; Winston Churchill, pettishly annoyed with her because she had not read his books; Henry James, caught in the act of visiting the notorious—but dashingly beautiful—Lady Colin Campbell.

It all sounds remote, but in its way rather fascinating. For the most part one did not have to think. Mrs. Atherton "got" a novel and wrote it at breakneck speed, except in the case of the documented historical novels which she spent long hours searching out. She campaigned, in spite of a reluctance to make speeches, for Woodrow Wilson, and without turning a hair was furiously on the side of France long before we entered the war. If afterwards the world was weighed down under a burden of misfortune, Mrs. Atherton could retreat to the California palace of her old friend, Senator Phelan, which charmingly and with warm sympathy she describes, and write more novels. Her life, in the main, has been conversation mixed with periods of feverish literary activity; most of her women friends have been beauties; most of the men she has known have been famous. She writes of them and of herself in a dashing, swift, agreeable style that they would understand and like. After all, poor Hardy, who could perhaps write better novels and may be remembered longer, could talk of nothing but tram cars; and in a world of conversation, that does not get one very far.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Down from the Ivory Tower

Harlan Miners Speak. The Report of the Dreiser Committee. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

THE recent investigation of the Harlan miners' conditions by the writers' committee is significant not only because it has focused attention upon the misery of the coal diggers, heightened by the reign of terror and the lawlessness of Kentucky officials, but because it also marks a new era in American literature. This organized protest by contemporary literary men brings to an end a certain kind of old-fashioned bohemian aestheticism—the ballet poet living in his ivory tower ten thousand feet above politics.

This country, unlike France or Russia, has never been very arable soil for manifestos; whatever social and especially political coherence there has been among writers of the same period has been peripheral. There were "things in the air," historical currents, which did not so much unite these novelists as simultaneously impinge upon them. What better proof have we of this than the recent writings of Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson, their awakening in the late autumn of their careers to the need of group protest against injustice and oppression in the United States. For all their earnestness they are in a sense befuddled émigrés in their own land.

As a landmark in American prose and feeling, Sherwood Anderson's contribution to the present book is singularly arresting. In his essay, I Want to Be Counted, an admixture of intuitive flashes and Mid-western cracker-box philosophizing about communism, he writes, and quite to the point: "We are, all of us, men and women living in one world while we think and feel, most of us, in an old and outworn world. We are living in one world, while we try to think and feel in another." Concluding, he says that what is needed to assure Americans of their constitutional rights is fewer speak-easy citizens and more criminal syndicalists.

Aside from the chapters by Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos, Arnold Johnson, and others, the most interesting part of the book is that given over to the testimonies of the evasive

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Sheriff J. H. Blair and Attorney William E. Brock of Harlan County. These Kentucky Socratic dialogues between Dreiser and the two officials have a cinema excitement about them, and are, besides, a commentary on the comedy of justice in that State's coal fields. The Dreyfus case seems like a political peccadillo compared with the high-handed and ruthless manner with which the Harlan law has dealt with the starving and persecuted miners.

A Washington Hearing, which concludes the book, is a moving and disturbing account of the second expedition of the writers to Harlan, in which Waldo Frank and Allen Taub, an attorney for the International Labor Defense, were badly beaten by Kentucky merchants and reactionary zealots of the Ku Klux Klan variety.

"Harlan Miners Speak" is extremely important as an exposé of the cruel and harassing peonage which has been imposed upon our native pioneers. The Daughters of the American Revolution, so much absorbed in genealogy and taken up with pure blood, ought to raise a large fund for relief, so that these Kentucky miners, backwoodsmen of early Colonial stock, may not be completely wiped out by the coal operators and their henchmen. The book is significant, finally, as a symbol of a new tendency, an aesthetic, deeply tinctured by politics, which will leave its mark upon American letters and thinking.

EDWARD DAHLBERG

The Menace of the Navy

The Navy: Defense or Portent? By Charles A. Beard. Harper and Brothers. $2.

A NEW book by Charles Beard is always an event, and "The Navy: Defense or Portent?" is such a timely, useful treatise that it should be required reading for all the ladies and gentlemen who function on Capitol Hill and all the ladies and gentlemen who send them there. In this brief volume of 200 pages, Mr. Beard, with his penetrating wit and skill, rips through the sacred aura that envelops the navy and leaves it shorn of its pretty uniform, no longer a glamorous service, a little ridiculous, obtuse, and shoddy in values. But through all the witty ridicule runs a penetrating note of warning and alarm. The heart of the book is a question: Should the power which wrecked Germany and Russia, and is now as surely destroying Japan, be permitted by a docile and bewildered people to bring America to its downfall, too?

"Civilian authority is indispensable to national security," Mr. Beard insists. "For though civilian authorities have been fallible and have made mistakes, their blunders have been trivial compared with the tragic havoc wrought by naval and military intelligence." And in the concise, pungent way of the modern historian he pins much of the blame for Germany's disaster to the stupidity of its naval "experts" and the agitation of its Navy League. Then he draws a revealing comparison between the Prussian militarist mind and that of our contemporary navalists, their supporters, and those who profit by the bloody business of war everywhere.

He bombards us with questions: Who is to control the armament development of the United States? Exactly what is to be defended? What instrumentalities of diplomacy and arms are to be used? Is our defense policy to be dominated by men trained primarily in the technology of warfare, or by the civilian branches of the government? How are we to know what defense forces are needed? What are we to defend—the territories of the United States? Or are we to be prepared to go into all the waters of the earth? Does defense mean the protection of Samoa, the Philippines, the Monroe Doctrine, the American dollar wherever it may be? Again, who wants this big navy? Is it chiefly those groups who spent $150,000 to "educate Congress" on the need of an adequate merchant marine? And if we are to have an adequate merchant marine to help expand the navy, why is it that we need to have a larger navy to help guard the merchant marine?

In his chapter Big Navy Propaganda Mr. Beard carries us through the amazing data obtained by the special Senate committee appointed to investigate the Shearer case, and in a penetrating analysis he challenges the pronouncements of the Navy League and finds them "crudely formulated, loosely stated, and possessing no savor of scientific precision." As for the so-called experts of the navy itself, he cites among others that priceless gem from the testimony of Admiral Rock before the Naval Affairs Committee of the House. This admiral, when asked if any of our battleships participated in any battle in the last war, replied: "They were in the grand fleet, but whether they were in the Battle of Jutland I do not remember." (The Battle of Jutland occurred in May, 1916.)

"Can the issue of adequate defense be categorically settled by the comparative types of fighting craft possessed by the various countries without reference to their foreign policies?" Mr. Beard demands. And hence, what are the issues of naval armaments realistically considered in relation to our foreign policy? "The necessity of clearing the naval program of the United States from all private and special interests is of primary concern," he declares. "When we know what we are to defend, and only then, can we adequately consider the size and scope of defense forces." The whole question of defense should hinge not on size, weight, speed, and numbers, but rather on a wise and intelligent foreign policy. "The most competent, the most imaginative, and the most disinterested intelligence of the country must be brought to bear on this question in the clear light of day, under full public scrutiny. Anything short of this does not meet the requirements of the situation which confronts the nation."

DOROTHY DETZER

By Way of Explanation

Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self. By Edward Gordon Craig. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.50.

Souvenirs: My Life with Maeterlinck. By Georgette Leblanc. E. P. Dutton and Company. $4.

BOOKS of explanation do not always accomplish what they set out to prove. But they nearly always add some new light which we did not have before. Had Gordon Craig not been stung into a supposedly needed defense of his mother by the publication of the Shaw-Terry letters, there might not have been written this delicate fancy which—once shorn of the superabundance of the ego of Craig himself—takes us refreshingly behind the scenes, and reveals Ellen Terry as seen by her intimates in her unguarded moments: the charming, impulsive, vacillating, fairy Ellen Terry, with her alertness, her quick aliveness, which she possessed to the very end of her days.

Craig claims that his mother, whom he calls Nelly, was another person than the famous actress, Ellen Terry. And he makes the two play hide-and-seek, as though they were characters in a new Eugene O'Neill play of masks. That may be, and we like the Barriesque handling of her feminine quandaries, her fickle being in love with love, her blind loyalties. Mr. Craig succeeds in presenting this side of Ellen Terry, never before so nicely colored, though we have always thought her book, "The Story of My Life," fairly represented her nature. But this new Craig book in no way annihilates Shaw's right to make known his correspondence with Ellen Terry; nor does it show any of the supposed inroads upon the true character

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of Ellen Terry which Craig's original charges against Shaw suggested. There is no more bad taste in a friend making public the approach between two interesting persons, who reflected in their communications much of the theater age in which both lived, than there is in a son spying upon the private sanctity of his mother, who welcomed a role of privacy because so much of her life had to be lived in the public eye. Personally, I like this kind of spying, if it is not exploiting. Neither Shaw nor Craig has exploited Ellen Terry. And all told, I believe that Shaw, through the epistolary aid of Ellen, brings us much closer to her intellectual and vivacious nature than Craig, who, without his mother's aid but with a receptive memory retouched by purpose, brings us to his idealized Nelly.

The grievance of Georgette Leblanc is of a different nature: it is the heart confession of a woman who lived many years with Maurice Maeterlinck but was never married to him, a woman who saved him from the depleting miasmas of mysticism and brought him safely into the stream of drama, of which "Monna Vanna" is so full-blooded an example. "Souvenirs" consists of exalted moments of love and bitter moments of rejection. It loves and hates and analyzes the course of unequal love in a compact that could be momentarily rejected. Georgette Leblanc overestimated her holding power; she gave what she could and now claims that what she gave drained her of whatever gifts she possessed. Her life was consecration to Maeterlinck, and we see him in these pages as taking all while she contented herself with crumbs from a genius's table. A life of anguish this, represented in a florid style. But Georgette Leblanc, whenever she forgets her accusations—and these are many, chief among them being her statement that she gave to Maeterlinck the thoughts that dominate his book "Wisdom and Destiny"—creates vivid pictures of their life together.

MONTROSE J. MOSES

A Panoramic Survey of Affairs

The United States in World Affairs: 1931. By Walter Lippmann in Collaboration with William O. Scroggs. Published for the Council of Foreign Relations. Harper and Brothers. $3.

AFTER publishing four scholarly volumes, edited by Charles P. Howland, surveying the underlying principles of American foreign policy, the Council of Foreign Relations has now undertaken to publish an annual survey of our foreign relations. Apparently the accumulation of facts for this survey has been intrusted to William O. Scroggs, Director of Information for the Council; while the responsibility for giving this data form and interpretation has rested largely with Mr. Lippmann.

In view of the complexity of international events, it is obviously impossible to cover the entire field of foreign affairs in a volume of 270 pages. Selection has therefore been necessary, and the authors have taken as their dominant theme the depression in its international aspects. Despite President Hoover's admission that the depression had "foreign causes," it is pointed out that the American government during the period under survey followed the doctrine of "self-containment." We believed, as did most other governments, that we could heal ourselves without regard to "foreigners"; but this policy to date at least has proved sterile. The effort to combat the depression by international means has, however, shown no better results. The conferences of the League of Nations for a tariff truce proved a failure. The attempt to restrict the market in wheat, sugar, coffee, rubber, oil, tin, and silver met with no success.

Because of its dependence upon the export of raw materials and the import of foreign capital, South America was the first continent to suffer from the depression. One result of the collapse of Latin America's economic structure was a series of political revolutions which drove dictators out of power. These events were followed by critical events in Central Europe, precipitated by the proposed Austro-German customs union and the failure of the Credit-Anstalt. The banking crisis in Austria led to a financial crisis in Germany, dependent upon foreign short-term capital. The Hoover moratorium followed—a moratorium which the authors assure us drew the United States "more intimately into European affairs than at any time since the Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles." Nevertheless, the moratorium did not ameliorate the situation in Germany or prevent the storm from striking Great Britain. The suspension of the gold standard in England led to hoarding in the United States and to an attack upon the dollar. This latter situation was partly alleviated by the Hoover-Laval conversations. The last chapter of the book deals with the collaboration of the United States with Europe in the limitation of armaments and in attempts to mediate in the Manchuria affair.

As a panoramic survey of recent international events this volume will be of value to general readers. But as far as advancing a discriminating understanding of foreign affairs is concerned, it is subject to two limitations: it does not contain any rounded description or analysis of the foreign policy of the United States during the past year; and it does not attempt to formulate the outstanding issues which are obstructing international cooperation. There is no discussion of the relations between the United States and Latin America except in regard to recognition, and here the authors commit the serious error of treating recognitions in Central and South America on the same basis. The book does not, moreover, contain the brilliant interpretation which characterizes most of Mr. Lippmann's other works. From reading its uncritical account of the moratorium and the Hoover-Laval conversations one would gather that the United States was moving toward a program of complete international cooperation; yet, as Mr. Lippmann has pointed out in his newspaper articles, isolationist sentiment is stronger now than at any time since the World War. Again, in their treatment of the Manchuria dispute very little effort is made to get at the roots of the failure of the League and the United States to check Japan. The authors do state that a League based on Article XVI was in the opinion of most people "impracticable, undesirable, and perilous," but this passing remark would hardly be accepted by all students of international organization. In discussing the Chadbourne sugar plan the authors do not mention the criticism that the plan has worked out to the injury of the Cuban sugar planters, to the profit of Wall Street bankers. Although they go out of their way to praise Ambassador Guggenheim for his neutrality in the recent Cuban revolution, they do not mention the criticism directed against the Ambassador by the Cuban nationalists; for that matter, they do not state what the causes of this revolution were. The book contains a selected bibliography which is, however, incomplete in a number of places; and the authors undoubtedly would not claim for their volume the authority or the scholarship which marks the annual surveys of Professor Toynbee published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

The fact that this volume is not designed for experts on foreign affairs should not, however, impair its value. Obviously it is designed to interest laymen in what is happening beyond their own boundaries. For this task no writer in this generation is better qualified than Mr. Lippmann. The present volume would have been more successful had he been at liberty to do what he does best, instead of being confined to a rather formal chronology of the past.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL

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Notes on Fiction

Bright Skin. By Julia Peterkin. Bobbs, Merrill and Company. $2.50.

This is the story of a "bright-skin," Cricket, in a Negro community of her own people for whom she was neither white nor black. Cricket was strange; she was not at home among the blacks; she found only a pitifully sordid salvation as a naked dancer in a Harlem night club. Her childhood Mrs. Peterkin describes with touching detail, along with the childhood of her devoted lover, Blue, and of her cousin, Man Jay, who was, like her, strange. The life of the South Carolina Negro Mrs. Peterkin knows thoroughly; the plantation, the empty great house, with the "joggling-boards" on the porch, where the whites used to live in careless splendor, the Negro cabins, the curious fascinating talk, the appearance and manners of an alien race are here, one cannot doubt, truly described. But the result, in spite of Blue, who could never forget Cricket, in spite of Cricket, who could never forget her "bright-skin" lover who was murdered before he could become her husband, in spite of the vivid details of the plantation life, is merely picturesque where it should be pathetic, even tragic. One suspects that Mrs. Peterkin, for all her sympathetic familiarity with the externals of these strange people, can never get at their insides. She has made them gay or drooping or disappointed puppets in an appealingly unusual setting. A member of another race can watch but cannot share their lives.

Three Loves. By A. J. Cronin. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

The second novel by the author of "Hatter's Castle" bears out much of the promise of the first and yet it is curiously disappointing. A tale of a woman with a passionate instinct to possess what she loves, its first third, Lucy's love for her husband, is told almost without a flaw. In it there is the everlasting tragedy of how men destroy what they love too much, in this case the destruction being literal and complete. In the second third of the book, Lucy the young wife has now become Lucy the mother, lavishing her strength and her unrelenting devotion on her son. But he repays her sacrifices by escape, and once more she is left alone. She turns to God, and death finds her disappointed a third time because Jesus cannot be hers in quite the complete way that will satisfy her. Here is material for a fine novel. What it needs more than anything else is a judicious editorial blue pencil. Dr. Cronin suffers from the excellent fault of too much energy, too many things to say, too much support of his central theme. If only someone could be found to restrain him—as he restrained himself in the triangle of Lucy, Anna, and Frank—he would safely establish himself among the first-rate novelists. As it is, he has written a swiftly moving, pitiful, and always interesting story of a woman who could do nothing in life but love.

Brothers. By L. A. G. Strong. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Against the background of the stormy Western Highlands and the vigorous, simple, clannish folk who dwell there, Mr. Strong has rewritten the old Jacob and Esau story of two brothers of antipathetic natures, and of what happened when a girl came between them. Mr. Strong's novel excels chiefly in its fine portrayal of the folk—mostly fishermen—and their ways, and in its often magnificent episodic passages, such as, for instance, the terrible scene in which the informer is put to death, and the epical rowing contest between the MacFarishes and the Macraes. To these passages the author imparts a true heroic touch, and herein lies the general impression of grandeur and strength the reader takes away from the book. It cannot

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be said, however, that Mr. Strong is equally successful in revealing the souls of his two leading figures, whose characters are accurately sketched rather than portrayed in the full. There is too much left for the reader to infer of the fatal differences between Fergus and Peter Macrae, while the love of both of them for the girl, Mary, fails to convince. Whatever the shortcomings of "Brothers" may be, however, it remains an exceptionally good novel, and should contribute considerably to the growing reputation of Mr. Strong as one of the most interesting of the younger British novelists.

Doctor Kerkhoven. By Jacob Wassermann. Translated by Cyrus Brooks. Liveright. $3.

After a most forbidding introduction this long novel quickens into considerable interest. Kerkhoven's intellectual awakening resulting from his friendship with Irlen, the dying aristocrat, supports the first part of the novel, and his growth from a provincial doctor to a celebrated and unconventional physician is impressive almost in spite of Wassermann's voluminous description of it. There is a curious quality of doubt in the writing, as though the author were attempting to convince himself rather than his reader. After Kerkhoven is securely established as a great character, the emphasis shifts from him to his youthful associate, Etzel Andergast, representative of disillusioned post-war youth. The remaining chapters are given over to an account of the faintly ominous, but never very clear, adventures of Etzel and his friends, working toward the climax as Etzel betrays Kerkhoven. The end is weak; after the scientific data, the elaborate biographical backgrounds, and the analysis of contemporary states of mind, the commonplace result of Etzel's affair with Kerkhoven's wife suggests that by intensive study and research we have finally discovered something that everyone already knows.

Drama

Attention Mr. Sirovich

THE Catholic Theater Movement began with the laudable intention of being "constructive." Instead of picking out certain plays for condemnation it proposed to issue a periodical "white list," and everyone, as I remember, thought the scheme most admirable. It is evident, however, that the Reverend Robert E. Woods, its chief, suffers from that moral hyperaesthesia characteristic of the professionally pure, and his list threatens to become soon not merely white, but entirely blank. Last season he brought himself to approve 45 out of 225 productions, but either the theater is getting worse or he is getting better, since only 4 of this spring's 50 offerings receive his blessings. When I add that, of the four, three had already closed before the list was published, it will appear that the "constructive" side of the organization's labors has been pretty nearly reduced to nil; and unless Mr. Sirovich has been permanently discouraged, I recommend the case to his attention. Who, I may ask, is hard to please now? And who—right in the midst of all our business troubles—is helping to ruin an institution which represents the investment of I do not know how many dollars and gives employment to I do not know how many persons? There ought, of course, to be some kind of law against it.

The four plays singled out as being acceptably aseptic were the following: "If Booth Had Missed," "Money in the Air," "Round Up," and "The Truth About Blayds." I must add that after rigorous soul-searching I agree to the extent of believing that I also found myself morally none the worse for

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Springtime for Henry—Shubert—W. 44 St.

The Animal Kingdom—Empire—B'way. at 40 St.

The Cat and the Fiddle—Cohan—43 St. & B'way.

The Man Who Changed His Name—Broadhurst—44 St. W. of B'way.

having witnessed the performances of these dramas. But I am not so sure that a certain mental deterioration, or, at least, a certain blunting of the powers of intellectual and artistic discrimination, was not produced by at least two of them, and I have never been able to understand why those who devote themselves to the protection of others should be concerned with only one side of the public's nature. Surely shallowness, triviality, sentimental falsehood, and plain nonsense are also corrupting things, and surely a shepherd who recommends his sheep to see "Money in the Air" rather than "Mourning Becomes Electra" is assuming a grave responsibility concerning which he may be called to account if it should turn out that God is interested in the general welfare of His children. Nor can I accept the assumption—apparently made by most reformers—that man's moral nature is so much more fragile than his intellectual and artistic integrity. It seems to be generally supposed that the young may wallow in namby-pamby nonsense throughout all their formative years without being a bit the worse for it, but that the sight of one exhilarating image or the sound of one risky joke, and they are ruined forever. Yet the assumption is both highly unflattering to our moral natures and also, according to my observation, entirely false, for I most solemnly believe that for one person started down the inclined plane of primroses by an "improper" book ten are dulled or cheapened by books and plays whose triviality libels life. Revising the "white list" on the basis of this conviction I should say: "The Truth About Blayds"—approved; "If Booth Had Missed"—inoffensive; but as for the other two, let the authors recant and do penance and let the works be burned.

The Reverend Robert E. Woods is sure, of course, that the world is getting worse and more shameless every minute. Of our so-called "sophistication" he says that "the word is enough to make the blood of a thinking man boil," and he is particularly infuriated by the suggestion that "times have changed." They have not changed for him, and he of course is right. Even I, to be sure, am not quite hardy enough to deny the proposition that "right is right." Perhaps someone knows what is decent and perhaps the world ought not to move. Still, one is tempted to whisper—as Galileo did not on a famous occasion—"Eppur si muove." One might add, also, that there does not seem to be much that can be done about it.

Joseph Wood Krutch

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